

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

SENT TO D.C.
7-2-04

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: **Washington Park**
other names/site number: **Western Division of South Park/ Park No. 21**

2. Location

street & number : **5531 S. King Drive** _____ Not for publication
city or town : **Chicago** _____ vicinity
state **Illinois** code **IL** county **Cook** code **031** zip code: **60615**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally _____ statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James L. White /SHH
Signature of certifying official

7-1-24
Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

American Indian Tribe

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
_____ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
_____ determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain):	_____	_____

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register	N/A
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Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District

Washington Park
Name of Property

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/ park
RECREATION AND CULTURE/ outdoor recreation
RECREATION AND CULTURE/ sports facility
OTHER/ field house

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/ park
RECREATION AND CULTURE/ outdoor recreation
RECREATION AND CULTURE/ sports facility
OTHER/ field house

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Beaux Arts Classicism
Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: CONCRETE

Roof: ASPHALT TILES

Walls: CONCRETE
BRICK

Other: EARTH
VEGETATION

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See Continuation Sheets

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape Architecture

Recreation and Entertainment

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance 1872- 1954 Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder **Frederick Law Olmsted**
 Daniel H. Burnham

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See Continuation Sheets

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9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 367 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	448819 4627986	3	16	449620 4626189
2	16	449596 4628006	4	16	448833 4626179
☐ See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: **Julia Sniderman Bachrach, Preservation Planning Supervisor**

organization: **Chicago Park District**

date: **February 26, 2004**

street & number: **541 N. Fairbanks Ave.**

telephone: **(312) 742-4698**

city or town: **Chicago**

state: **IL**

zip code: **60611**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **Timothy J. Mitchell, General Superintendent, Chicago Park District**

street & number **541 North Fairbanks**

telephone

city or town **Chicago**

state **IL**

zip code **60611**

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Washington Park, Chicago

Narrative Description

Washington Park is a 367-acre site located between 400 east 800 east and E. 51st Street 5100 south and 6000 south in Chicago, Illinois. It was conceived as part of a large 1055-acre park known as South Park, which is now considered three sites: Jackson Park, known as the Eastern Division; the Midway Plaisance, the connecting boulevard; and Washington Park, the Western Division. Jackson Park and the Midway Plaisance were listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 15, 1972. Washington Park retains strong integrity and continues to reflect much of its original plan conceived by nationally renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Considering that the Eastern Division, now known as Jackson Park, underwent several redesigns, especially to accommodate the World's Columbian Exposition, and that the Midway Plaisance was never fully executed, Washington Park remains as the most intact representation of Olmsted's masterful 1871 plan for South Park.

Over the years, Washington Park has continuously adapted to the frequently changing needs of the surrounding community while retaining a very high level of integrity. In order to clearly describe Washington Park and show that it retains sufficient integrity to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, four corresponding plans are submitted as part of this nomination: Olmsted's original plan for South Park which was published in 1871 [A], an 1880 record plan [B], a 1905 South Park Commission record plan of the park [C], and a current plot plan [D].

Washington Park is bounded on the north by E. 51st Street, on the south by the E. 60th St., on the east by Cottage Grove Avenue and on the west by S. King. The park is located in the Washington Park community area. It is at the south end of an area known as "Bronzeville" or the "Black Metropolis." Between the 1890s and 1920s, large numbers of African Americans from the rural south began settling in this neighborhood, which extended between approximately 25th Street to 51st Street. "Bronzeville" became a culturally rich community with a high percentage of homes, buildings, and businesses owned by African Americans. This remained a vibrant and stable neighborhood until the 1950s when it began to decline. At the south end and extending east from Washington Park are the University of Chicago and the Hyde Park neighborhood. Incorporated in 1890, the University campus includes numerous significant buildings by important historic architects such as Henry Ives Cobb, Dwight H. Perkins and others. The Hyde Park Community also suffered decline during the Post WWII period, but since the 1960s and 1970s experienced significant improvements and is now one of Chicago's most stable and desirable neighborhoods.

Olmsted's plan and the earliest construction of Washington Park date to 1871 well before the introduction of the automobile. The park's paths and roadways were originally intended for pedestrians, horses, carriages, and horse-drawn wagons. The roadway system had to adapt to the introduction of the automobile, and over the years, increasingly heavy use by cars and trucks. With the exception of some drive and path widening, the NPS

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removal of a few stretches of paths and drives, and the straightening of some curved stretches, the circulation system well reflects Olmsted's original plan [A]. Much of the roadway system was in place by 1880 [B].

The park was originally divided into two general areas outlined by circuit drives that generally follow an 8 shape. The loop at the south end of the park [1] encircles the pool and the mere and some lovely areas of landscape including the Seven Hills area, the Mall, and the deer paddock peninsula, which later became Bynum Island. The adjoining loop at the north [2] encircles the South Open Green, also known as the meadow or ball fields. Most of the buildings are on the outer perimeter of the park, as Olmsted had originally intended. The east side of the south loop [1] adjoins with the Midway Plaisance and as it travels north, this stretch, known as Payne Drive, forks off, with the eastern portion still known as Payne Drive, and the portion curving to the west is known as Morgan Drive. This meets the southeastern curve of the north loop [2], known as Rainey Drive. Where the fork in Payne Drive meets Rainey Drive, it forms a triangular space in the landscape. Originally, some curving paths dissected the triangle [B]. By 1905, those internal paths had been removed [C]. Today, the character of the triangle, with lawn and scattered trees continues to reflect the 1905 plan [C], although fast speed traffic makes it difficult for a pedestrian to reach the triangle area.

The west side of the south loop closely reflects Olmsted's original plan [A]. The area on the far west end is now known as Russell Drive. Historically, this was Lafayette Drive. It includes a secondary loop that is on axis with the mall that was included in the original plan [A] and was constructed by 1905 [B]. When Russell Drive curves at the far south end of the park, the roadway becomes known as Best Drive. (Historically, this was called Lafayette Drive also). This aligns with the Midway Plaisance, completing the south loop.

Much of the north loop [2] remains intact, although there have been some changes, particularly at the extreme north end of the park. Payne Drive follows its historic alignment, curving to the northeast corner of the park and linking with Drexel Boulevard. While historically this forked off to the west into a loopy road known as North Drive, with several winding paths that intersected, by the mid- 1970s this northernmost portion of the circuit drive had been removed. Some of the original bridle paths and pedestrian paths continue to follow the historic alignment. Today, traveling north along Payne Drive, an automobile must exit the park at Cottage Grove Avenue and turn west on 51st Street, if one wants to reach the northwest side of the park. One can then reenter the park on Ellsworth Drive, the western portion of the north loop road. This meets with Garfield Boulevard and continues onto Morgan Drive, the portion of the roadway that serves both the south loop [1] and the north loop [2].

At the south end of Washington Park, the Midway Plaisance [3] forms a grand entranceway to the park. Olmsted intended for a formal water basin to flow down the Midway Plaisance linking the lagoons of Jackson Park to the small lake known as the Mere [5] in Washington Park. Although some excavation took place in the 1890s or early 1900s, the project was abandoned, and the vision for a canal in the center of the Midway was never realized. Today, there are plans for a new garden to be located at the juncture of the Midway Plaisance to be created in honor of Dr. Allison Davis.

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It is expected that the garden, which has been designed by landscape architect Peter Lindsay Schaudt, will be completed in 2005.

On the west side of Payne Drive, on axis with the Midway Plaisance lays the Fountain of Time [4]. This magnificent sculptural fountain is considered the masterpiece of distinguished Chicago artist Lorado Taft. Completed in 1922, the sculpture is composed of buff colored concrete with exposed pieces of aggregate in various shades of brown. John Earley (1881-1945) developed this method of casting concrete, which is often considered the "polychrome" process because of the possibilities of varying the color through the use of aggregate pieces of various hues. Earley had conferred with Taft on casting the Fountain of Time. In general, the wave of human figures has the babies, children and younger people on the north end of the sculpture; athletes, soldiers, and other figures representing the prime of life in the center; and older people on the south end of the monument.

Taft utilized his daughters, students, and even himself as models for the figures. (The self-portrait is on the rear façade of the fountain.) In 1966, the Chicago Park District installed a triangular granite plaque [67] on the ground just west of the monument identifying the self-portrait of Taft. At the same time, a large square granite plaque was installed on the east side of the monument. This plaque includes the Austin Dobson couplet that inspired the artwork and some other brief information about the monument.

The Chicago Park District and Ferguson Fund of the Art Institute of Chicago have recently conducted a one million dollar conservation of the Fountain of Time's sculptural components, however, the reflecting basin is still in need of conservation. The National Park Service recently awarded the Chicago Park District a 2004 Save America's Treasures Grant to conduct this project. It is anticipated that the work will be undertaken in 2004 or 2005.

The Mere [5], Washington Park's gently curving lagoon, forms a loop around an island that became known as Bynum Island [6] in 1970. Originally, this was a peninsula composed of a naturalistic landform. The Mere edged around most of the landform, but did not form a full loop. In Olmsted's original plan [A] the peninsula was identified as the deer paddock. In the 1870s, this area was not yet fully constructed, and the South Park Commissioners created a small petting zoo with deer on the eastern edge of the park in the area that is now the maintenance yard. The Mere was completed in 1886. Although the peninsula was never used as a deer paddock, in 1903, the commissioners built a sheepfold there. The sheep grazed in various parts of the park during the day and the shepherd gather them into a pen that was located on the peninsula. In 1904, the peninsula was transformed into an island. The commissioners removed the isthmus, completing the waterway's loop. Boaters and ice skaters were then able to make a complete circuit around the island. The revised configuration can be seen on the 1905 record plan of the park [C].

In 1970, the Chicago Park District designated the island [6] as the Bynum Adventure Playland. At the time, the interactive "space-age style" playground was considered to be the state of the art in children's outdoor play

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environments. Over the years, however, playground styles and equipment types and materials changed and evolved. By the late 1980s, much of the Bynum Adventure Playland equipment deteriorated. In 1990, the park district closed the Playland and removed most of the equipment. Only the Playland's outdoor amphitheater stone seating remains. Over the years, awareness of the importance of Olmsted's vision for the park has increased, and park district administrators now believe that a large playground is not appropriate on the island. The park district has recently installed a modest ropes course on the island. The course provides adventure and team building activities without being obtrusive to the naturalistic qualities of the landscape.

There are two bridges that provide access to the island. The south bridge, known historically as the farmstead bridge, was built in 1882 of iron and stone. It appears that the original bridge was replaced in the 1930s with a vehicular bridge [7], during a period when major WPA-funded work was underway. The Chicago Park District replaced the historic decking and rail [7] in 1970 as part of the Bynum Island Playland Adventure project. This project retained the historic abutments that are faced with limestone ashlar. The original north bridge, known as the rustic bridge, was installed in 1904, when the lagoon was extended and the peninsula became an island. In 1915, the South Park Commission replaced the rustic bridge, with a new pedestrian bridge [8] with concrete abutments faced with red granite rubble. Designed by in-house architects, this was also known as the rustic bridge. The original wooden decking and rustic timber railings no longer exist. The Chicago Park District replaced the decking in 1970. The railings appear to be older. The north bridge does retain its 1915 abutments and much of its granite facing.

In 2003, the Mere [5], the island [6] and surrounding landscape received significant improvements as the result of a \$1.9 million project managed by the Chicago Park District Department of Natural Resources. Designed by Wolff Clements and Associates, landscape architects, the project provides improved drainage and water circulation; a wetland edge treatment; a new shelter in the location of the boat house; planting 200 trees of species used historically in the park such as mock orange, oak, and elm; overlook areas with benches, plantings and granite boulders; new fishing stations; three new boardwalks. Two of the boardwalks [9, 10] and the new fishing stations are located on the southeast side of the Mere. The boardwalks are simple plank structures composed of recycled plastic. One of them crosses a small cove at the southeast corner of the Mere [9]. The other one [10] edges the southeastern tip of the island.

On the northeast side of the Mere is a serpentine area of the waterway [11]. This intricate and winding arm of the waterway was added in 1904 when the commissioners removed the isthmus and completed adjacent loop in the waterway. Historically, the northern tip of this area was a rocky brook with water cascading over boulders. In the late 1990s, the Chicago Park District restored the rocky brook. As part of the larger 2003 landscape improvement project, the landscape surrounding the serpentine arm of the waterway has been planted as a stroll garden with new trees, lush perennials, and some aquatic plants. Just to the northeast of the serpentine waterway is a small comfort station [12]. Designed by South Park Commission in-house architects, this structure was built in 1904 to provide bathroom facilities to boaters, skaters, and other park patrons. It is a one-story building, L-shaped in plan. It is composed of brick, and has a hipped roof. Although the brick comfort

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station has had on-going problems with graffiti and improper removal methods, it still conveys its historic appearance.

The landscape area located north of the Mere [5] and south of the Pool [14] is quite lovely with a rolling topography, and open meadow edged by groves of canopy trees. Due to the undulating quality of the landscape, for years the community has called this area the Seven Hills [13]. The 2003 landscape project in Washington Park included drainage improvements for the Seven Hills area and some new trees planted on the edges of the Mere.

The Pool [14] is a small oblong soft-edged lagoon located north of the Seven Hills and just south of Morgan Drive. Olmsted included this water feature and its two small islands in his original plan [A] and they were completed in 1880. Between the 1880s and 1950s, park patrons used the Pool for the sport of curling in the winters. Beginning in 1884, the South Park Commission erected a portable warming shelter each winter near the shore of the Pool for curlers. The Pool continued to be used for curling until the early 1950s. During the warmer seasons, the Chicago Park District began stocking the Pool with fish, and in 1954, a casting pier [15] was erected. The pier is T-shaped in configuration and composed of concrete. The Pool, pier, and surrounding paths and landscape continue to convey their historic appearance.

On the west side of the Mere is an area known as the Mall. Olmsted often included formal areas such as this as a promenade or parade ground. The Mall is composed of a long walkway extending north-south [16], intersected by a shorter east-west walkway leading to Loop Drive, a circular road that spurs off of Russell Drive [1]. The South Park Commissioners installed the Mall in 1884-5. The north-south walkway was lined on each side by monoculture canopy trees, possibly originally composed of American elms. None of the original trees survived, and in the late 1990s, the Chicago Park District planted a formal row of London Plane trees along each side of the walkway. The Park District planted hybridized elms along the east-west walkway, although trees did not originally line this intersecting walkway. Ornamental light fixtures that were installed in 1892 reinforced the formality of the allée along the north to south walkway. Although the original light fixtures did not survive, the Chicago Park District installed replicas in the late 1990s. While these are not exact replicas, they are quite similar in appearance to the original dark metal poles with a foliage pattern along the base.

In 1910, the Olmsted Brothers recommended the installation of fountains similar to those at the Pointe Rond on the Champs Elysées in Paris. The following year, the South Park Commissioners purchased the pair of fountains from a French company and installed them in circular granite basins [17] at the north and south ends of the Mall. Today, the basins remain [17] although the ornamental fountains are no longer extant. The date and reason for the removal of the fountains is unclear; however, it is possible that the fountains may have been removed in 1964 when the Chicago Park District razed the nearby boathouse.

The South Park Commission built the boathouse along the shore of the Mere on axis with the Mall's east-west walkway in 1902. It had a center portion with a kitchen, locker rooms and bathrooms, flanked by two

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outer wings that provided storage facilities for more than 100 rowboats. It was a classically designed structure with colonnades extending along the outer wings. The Chicago Park District demolished the boathouse in 1964, several years after rowing had been offered in the park. In 2003, as part of the lagoon restoration project, the Chicago Park District is constructing a simple shelter structure in the location of the center portion of the original boathouse. The new shelter, designed by Wolff Clements and Associates [18] is constructed of metal. North of the boathouse, at the northwest edge of the mere is an area that was planted as a wetland in 1996 as the result of a federal grant. In 2003, the area received further enhancements. A new boardwalk composed of plastic planks [19] crosses the wetland area. Granite boulders have been installed as accents in the landscape. Aquatic plants have been placed in the mere, and perennials have been planted along the edges.

On the north side of the park, within the north loop [2] of drives, walks, and bridle paths is the South Open Green [20]. This meadow is one of the park's most important landscape features. Representing the "Beautiful," a style derived from the English Landscape School, Olmsted conceived this as a magnificent lawn surrounded by an irregular border of shrubs and trees. He intended to have sheep and cows grazing freely on the meadow, and although cows were never introduced, for many years the commissioners purchased a new flock of sheep each spring to roam on the South Open Green. The trees and shrubs along the border framed views of the meadow and its grazing sheep. The South Open Green was one of the earliest improvements in the park. The South Park Commission began grading the area in 1872, and during the next several years, landscape architect Horace WS Cleveland oversaw the initial planting of the meadow and its borders. Ball diamonds were first introduced in 1888, and the South Open Green has been used for baseball ever since.

Today, the meadow provides baseball diamonds, football and soccer fields. The South Open Green [20] is still edged by groupings of trees, although there is little shrubbery. On July 6, 2003, severe storms destroyed a number of mature trees throughout Washington Park; however, many older canopy trees along the edges of the South Open Green survived. Over the next few years, the Chicago Park District intends to plant hundreds of new trees along the edges of the meadow and other important locations throughout the park.

In 1990, the Chicago Park District renamed the South Open Green [20] as the Common Ground in honor of Harold Washington, a Chicago mayor known for building alliances between diverse people and groups. In 1983, Washington (1922- 1987) was the first African American elected as mayor in Chicago, but suffered a fatal heart attack soon after he began his second term in 1987. The meadow is an appropriate symbol for the common ground, an expression often used by Washington. In addition, the site was selected because the deceased mayor had lived nearby on the south side of Chicago, and because his last name was Washington. At the south end of the meadow, the Common Ground is marked by a perennial bed [21] with two boulders: one with a quote from Frederick Law Olmsted, and one from Mayor Harold Washington. Three other commemorative boulders [21] mark the south, east, and west edges of the Common Ground.

On the southeast edge of the meadow, is a small comfort station [22]. Constructed in 1936, the building was one of several WPA-funded improvements in Washington Park designed and built by Chicago Park District

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staff members. At the time, the Chicago Park District Engineering Department had produced several drawings for several standard comfort stations and shelters. This structure was considered the English Stone style. Composed of lannon stone the building is one-story in height. It has a gable roof and a chimney. There are arched doorway openings at both of the gable ends.

On the north side of the meadow, there is a historic commemorative marker [23]. The South Park Commissioners installed this large granite boulder on Dec. 6, 1879 to commemorate an elm tree that was planted by President Ulysses S. Grant. The large boulder remains, however, the elm tree did not survive. Historically, the tree and boulder sat at the northern edge of the South Open Green, adjacent to the north end of the loop drive [2] which was known first as North Drive [B] and later as Bowen Drive. This portion of the park's circulation system has changed significantly over the years. In the late 1930s, the Chicago Park District made modifications to the northwest side of the circuit. The double drives connecting to the park from Drexel Boulevard were modified into a single drive. (The Chicago Park District removed the south portion of the double drive and retained the north portion.) At the same time, the park district installed a surface parking lot [24] just west of the drive, on the northeast side of the South Open Green. The remaining portion of North Drive was removed in the early 1970s when Walter H. Dyett Middle School was under construction. The removal of this portion of the roadway made it impossible to drive east-west on the north loop. Rather, automobiles must exit the park at either Ellsworth Drive or Payne Drive and follow 51st Street and then reenter the park.

Directly to the north of the surface parking lot [24] is a concrete play slab [25]. The Chicago Park District installed the rectangular slab in 1971 to provide a hard surface for roller-skating. North of the play slab on the outer perimeter of the park and adjacent to 51st Street is a tennis court [26]. The Chicago Park District installed this tennis court as one of many WPA-funded improvements to the park in the late 1930s.

The Walter H. Dyett Middle School [27, 28, 29] is a Modern style complex designed by architects David N. Haid and Kenneth Childers. The school is composed of two buildings that are connected underground. The academic center [27] is on the east side of the complex. It is a large steel frame building with two inner courtyards. Apparently, the philosophy of the design was to create a harmonious relationship between buildings and the exterior landscape. The academic center, however, has a bold and sterile appearance with a flat roof and black exterior walls. The natatorium [28] is also a steel frame building with a flat roof. It is more transparent looking, however, with glassy facades, which may have also been the original objective of the academic building. The Chicago Park District and the Chicago Public Schools provide joint programming at the natatorium, which has a gymnasium and an indoor swimming pool. The complex includes a large surface parking lot [29] east of the academic center. The architecture of the 1970s school buildings [27, 28], the addition of the school parking lot [29] and the alterations to the circuit drive had a negative impact on the integrity of the landscape at the north side of Washington Park.

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There is a historic light fixture on the west side of the meadow, south of Dyett School [30]. This ornamental metal light pole along with a matching one on the east side of the park [55], are the only two original fixtures that remain in the park. This style of lights, with a foliage pattern at the base, and an elegant curved arm, were used in the park from approximately 1890 to 1930. Although the park district made an attempt to replicate them to line the mall in recent years, these are not exact reproductions and not as elegant as the originals. Unfortunately, both of the historic light fixtures are inoperable.

The western perimeter of the park between 51st Street and Garfield Boulevard retains its configuration and its original path system. This part of the landscape has a number of mature trees, however, historically the area had a rolling topography with dense groves of oak trees. The Superintendent's house was built in this area in the 1870s. The Chicago Park District razed the Italianate style house in the late 1950s. Historically, there was an irregularly shaped water feature known as the children's wading pool or the duck pond, located just south of the Superintendent's House. In 1936, the Chicago Park District converted it to a botanical pool, with various kinds of aquatic plants. Approximately 22 years later, when the Superintendent's House was demolished, the park district filled the nearby water feature and built a children's playground [31] on the site. Interestingly, all of the original paths and some of the historic plantings remain, making it very easy to visualize the original pond and its small island.

Just south of 53rd Street on the western perimeter of the park there is an area known as the Public Forum [32]. Composed of benches and a flagpole, the Chicago Park District installed this WPA-improvement in 1936. Although benches have been replaced and repaired over the years, the Public Forum has changed little since it was originally installed. It is occasionally still used today for small gatherings and events.

The western perimeter of Washington Park is bisected by Garfield Boulevard [33]. This historic gateway into the park retains its double drive configuration with a planted median in the center. Although the boulevard retains design integrity, over the years, it increasingly provided a fast speed route through the park. Garfield Boulevard meets with Morgan Drive, which is much wider than it was historically. There is heavy traffic from automobiles driving through the park, and it is difficult for pedestrians to get across Garfield Boulevard.

The Washington Park Refectory [34] is located on western perimeter, just south of Garfield Boulevard. Olmsted had identified this as a site for a park pavilion [A]. The Refectory is an elegant classically inspired building designed by Burnham & Root in 1891. Construction was completed the following year. Composed of buff colored Roman brick, the two-story building has a hipped roof with four square rooftop towers that extend above the roofline. The second story has arched windows with fanlights. At the first story level, the east and west facades extend into a lower wing with a shallow hipped roof. A loggia extends along the north, east, and west facades of the first story level. Colonnades of Doric columns composed of white terra cotta define the outer perimeter of the loggia. The building originally provided refreshment rooms, a kitchen, and administrative office space. Among its fine original interior features was a mosaic floor. Produced by Murdoch, Campbell & Co. the mosaic floor was used in the vestibule and refreshment rooms of the first floor.

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In 1936, the Chicago Park District constructed a major aquatic facility just to the south of the Refectory. This was the one of the most ambitious of the Washington Park improvements funded by the WPA. Then considered the premier swimming facility in the park system, this outdoor complex had three swimming pools: an Olympic-sized pool, a standard-sized pool, and a diving pool. The complex also included a large grandstand with bathrooms and filter house [35], and two massive light towers [36], both executed in the Art Deco style. At the same time, the park district converted the Refectory into a recreation center to provide locker and changing rooms for the swimming complex. Clubrooms were also added at that time. In 1963, the park district conducted a second alteration to the refectory, adding more interior space by enclosing a corner of the loggia at the northwest side of the building.

By the late 1980s, the Refectory and swimming complex were severely deteriorated. In 1991, Chicago Park District hired a team of architects and engineers led by the firm of A. Epstein & Sons to rehabilitate the historic refectory and renovate the adjacent aquatic complex. The original pools were removed and replaced by one large competitive-sized swimming pool with adjoining spray pools [37] and a smaller rectangular pool with a giant slide [38]. The project included retaining the Art Deco style concrete grandstand/ filter house [35], and adding a lifeguard office and concession stand to the existing rooms underneath. Metal rails and awnings were added in areas along the bleachers to provide shade. The light towers [36] were also retained and are located near the giant slide. The Refectory continues to provide locker rooms for the aquatic facility, and therefore it was not possible to restore the building to its original floor plan. Architects Hasbrouck, Peterson & Zimoch, the firm most involved with the rehabilitation used attractive new interior materials, such as terrazzo flooring. During construction, a remnant of the original mosaic floor was found. The park district hired an expert to conserve the remnant of the original flooring. This was installed near the fireplace on the first floor.

The parking lot [39] adjacent to the Refectory was constructed along with the building in 1892. Although this was originally surfaced with macadam, by the mid 1930s asphalt was used for this and other parking lots in the park. The parking lot was expanded slightly in the early 1950s, when the field house was under construction.

The field house [40] is a two-story red brick building with a one-story wing at its western side. The one-story wing extends beyond the south wall of the two-story building. Both the two-story and one-story portions of the building have flat roofs. Consulting engineer Ralph H. Burke designed the building. The Chicago Park District broke ground in 1953, and construction continued through 1954. The building was formally dedicated on March 9, 1955. The Washington Park field house has two gymnasiums, offices, clubrooms, classrooms, a fitness center.

There is a children's playground [41] south of the Refectory and aquatic center. This was originally installed sometime after 1918 and before 1934. The playground included a circular concrete wading pool that was similar in design those of the south side small parks such as Sherman and Fuller Parks. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Chicago Park District converted the wading pools to spray pools. This playground is has metal picket fencing and attractive stone posts [42]. The fencing has been replaced in recent years, but the stone posts [42]

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are original. The playground equipment has also been updated several times over the years.

Along the western perimeter of the park is a long row of tennis courts [43] and basketball courts [66]. These courts occupy an area known as the "speedway" which was installed by the South Park Commission in 1889 [C]. Originally, this roadway, used to exercise horses and for horses and carriages to drive at a fast pace stretched from Garfield Boulevard south to the southwestern entrance to the park (just north of 60th Street). In 1911, the speedway was closed, and the right-of-way converted to 27 tennis courts. In the 1930s, the park district converted some of the courts to shuffleboard. Later, some of these became volleyball courts. In the early 1950s, four courts were removed to provide adequate landscape space around the field house and two courts were converted a small surface parking lot [44] for the field house. During the late 1950s, the park district began converting some of the courts to basketball courts. Today, there are 13 tennis courts and eight basketball courts (providing a total of 26 basketball standards).

The south perimeter, stretching along E. 60th Street from S. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive at the west to Cottage Grove Ave. at the east is a lovely area of the park that retains a high degree of integrity. The landscape descends gently from a higher point at Best Drive [1] to the south perimeter. The western-most area, near the entrance at King Drive and 60th streets, includes gently rolling landforms. There are many historic trees in this area, although a number were destroyed during the July 2003 storm. The park district has developed planting plans that address this area. The perimeter retains most of its original path alignment, except around the children's playground [45] that was added in the late 1950s or early 1960s. The playground equipment has been updated over the years.

The eastern perimeter of the park, stretching from the Midway Plaisance to E. 51st Street, includes many buildings, facilities, and gardens— most of which are contributing features. Just to the north of the Midway Plaisance is the maintenance/ trades yard. In 1874, the South Park Commission constructed a carpenter and blacksmith shop at this site. The deer paddock, which was installed nearby, was removed in 1883. The commissioners demolished the original shop and replaced it with a larger complex in 1894. This complex continued to be expanded until the late 1930s.

The original 1894 complex included 3 brick buildings [46, 47, 48]. These are one-story red brick buildings that are rectangular in plan. The building that is now the center of the complex [46] has a saw-toothed roof with skylights. The building to the east of this [47] also has a saw-toothed roof with skylights. A large metal tank storing sawdust (before its removal) extends above the roofline in the center of the building. The west façade of this building [47], facing the yard, has curved exterior brick walls at its northwest and southwest corners. The building just to the north has a portion dating to 1894 and an addition that was built in 1903 [48]. Its west façade has a curved exterior wall at the southwest corner, matching that of the adjacent building [47]. This structure [48] is L-shaped in plan. While the south end, which dates to 1894, may have originally had a matching saw-toothed roof, now the building has a hipped roof at the north-south wing and a flat roof at the east-west wing.

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The largest structure in the yard [49] a red brick building is L-shaped in plan. This was originally 2 separate buildings: one at the west side and one at the south side of the complex. The west wing is long and rectangular in plan and dates to 1907. It has a hipped roof. On its north façade, a small flat roofed structure juts to the east. In the 1930s this was a storage shed for lumber, and was later converted to garage stalls. It abuts the west structure [49]. On the south end of the complex, the original garage was a free-standing structure dating to 1903. In the late 1930s, the garage was enlarged significantly on its south side and an addition was built adjoining it to the western structure. The garage area has a hipped roof. A flat roof provides a canopy between the garage [49] and the center building [46]. There are maintenance yards and drives surfaced in asphalt adjacent to the buildings.

Just north of the maintenance/ trades yard are other buildings that were built to support the operation of Washington Park and other south side parks. In 1892, the South Park Commission constructed an Electric Power House. The following decade, as the commission began efforts to create small parks throughout the south side, it was determined that a larger more modern power house would be needed. In 1906, the South Park Commission constructed an impressive new Electric Power House to serve the entire district. The brick building [50] is three stories tall. (It is 53' in height.) It has a flat roof and a 200' tall cylindrical chimney stack. The building has red face brick on all of the facades, except the south façade, which is composed of common brick. Classically inspired details such as brackets and pilasters and elegant windows enliven the primary facades.

Just south of the Electric Power House is a structure known as the Laundry [51]. This building is located on the site of the old Power House. Constructed in 1914, the brick building has several later additions at its southwest side. Together the building and its additions are L-shaped in plan. The older part of the building, located on the east side of the complex, is composed of common brick and has a hipped roof. The original facades had limestone sills and lintels, which are still intact. Unfortunately, the fenestration has been altered quite a bit. Several windows have been in-filled with brick, and doors and windows have been changed and added over the years. The complex has been enlarged and altered many times. In the early 1940s, the Chicago Park District built a large addition to the southwest side of the 1914 laundry building. The addition is rectangular in plan and has a hipped roof with overhanging eaves. It provided space for an archery club, bathrooms, and an old men's club. Later additions are also composed of brick and extend north from the club building.

The more recent additions of the Laundry complex abut the historic Stables and Roundhouse Building [52], forming a courtyard that is accessible from E. 57th Street. Designed by Burnham & Root and constructed in 1880, the Roundhouse and Stables is the oldest and one of the most significant buildings in Washington Park. It is composed of random ashlar Joliet limestone. The building has a unique form. It has a cross-axial layout with a circular component on the south and a rectangular component on the north. Originally, the large circular room (often considered the Roundhouse) provided 60 horse stalls. Three smaller rectangular rooms jutted out from Roundhouse providing spaces for blacksmith shops, material storage, feed, etc. Of the three jut-outs, the west and south rectangular rooms remain in tact. The South Park Commission altered the east rectangular room in

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1889, when a large addition was constructed on the building's northeast side to provide 40 additional horse stalls. Much of the building continued to be used for trades and park maintenance functions after the Chicago Park District took over. In 1936, the park district remodeled the Roundhouse interior space into the central drama shop. Sets, costumes, and props were produced and stored in the building. Despite the 1936 alteration, many of the Roundhouse's historic features remain including the circular ribbon of windows beneath the roofline, exposed trusses, and cupola.

Just north of the Stables and Roundhouse Building, and north of E. 57th Street is the DuSable Museum of African American History [53]. Designed by D.H. Burnham & Co., the building originally served as the administrative headquarters for the South Park Commission. Completed in 1910, the Classical style building is composed of exposed aggregate concrete. The original Administration Building is rectangular in plan oriented east-west, with a two rectangular wings, set back and also oriented east-west, and a smaller rectangular component centrally located on the south façade. The building was enlarged considerably in 1992, when the Harold Washington Wing was constructed on the south side of the building to provide for an expansion of the DuSable Museum. The original building is one-story in height with intersecting hipped roofs. The Harold Washington Wing is 3-story in height with a flat roof. The original building has many exterior Classical style details, such as pilasters, swags, garlands, and cartouches. Although some original details are missing such as the ceramic tile roof and balustrade extending above the cornice line and there are replacement windows, the building does retain sufficient integrity to deem it as a contributing feature. The building conveys its historic appearance and its primary façade faces the garden. The addition is tucked behind the original, and because the ground slopes down, the addition appears to be smaller in height than it really is.

The 1992 Harold Washington Wing is constructed of concrete that is painted white. It is bold and modern, with facades rendered as flat planes scored with horizontal and vertical lines forming a simple pattern of squares and rectangles. The addition has black tinted windows that match the original building's replacement windows.

Today, the DuSable Museum is planning its next expansion that will include leasing the Stables and Roundhouse Building [52] and converting it to museum exhibit space. The existing building will be used for programming and administrative functions. The two buildings will have an underground connection including a 600-car underground garage.

The terrace area north of the original Administration Building [53] had lawn and paved areas, classically rendered balustrades, planted urns. The original topography, configuration of paths and lawn areas, some portions of the balustrade [54], and exposed aggregate concrete steps [54] leading to the sunken garden remain today. There is one original ornamental light post [55] just to the northeast of the building. Like the one discovered on the west side of the park [30], this is now inoperable. The terrace has changed substantially, however, since it was installed in 1912. Large areas of balustrade, including curved portions, no longer survive. The original urns and fountains are also missing; however, the two circular granite basins [56] in which the

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ornamental fountains originally sat remain in place, flanking the entrance to the museum [53]. Modern pavers surround the historic granite basins [56].

In 1897, the South Park Commission constructed the Washington Park Conservatory on the upper terrace, east of the sunken garden [57]. While the paths and steps [54] make it easy to identify the site of the conservatory, the building has been gone since 1936, when the park district demolished it. The sunken garden retains the + shaped configuration of its original paths.

In the 1970s, the sunken garden just north of the terrace became the DuSable Museum's sculpture garden [57]. The first piece of sculpture was a bust of Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable. Sculptor Robert Jones originally produced a plaster version of this larger-than-life sized bust in 1963. In 1971, the piece was recast in bronze and installed at the terrace north of the museum. (Later, it was moved inside of the museum, where it still sits.) In 1977, the DuSable Museum received a grant from the City of Chicago for five additional sculptures. Artists Ausbra Ford, Geraldine McCullough, Jill Parker, Romon Bertell Price, and Lawrence E. Taylor sculpted the pieces. Today, only four of the five sculptures remain.

Just north of the sunken sculpture garden [57] is the site of the old rose garden [58]. Originally installed in 1900, the rose garden sat within a sunken lawn, defined by trimmed hedges and surrounded at the perimeter with densely planted trees and shrubs. After the completion of the Administration Building in 1912, the commissioners made additional improvements to the rose garden. At this time, concrete benches were installed in the rose garden. Matching rows of benches historically located on the terrace adjacent to the Administration Building, the rose garden benches are backless with a simple and elegant form. Two of the rose garden benches survive [59], although one is damaged. Today, only the topography, the path leading to the garden, and some of the trees that were planted along the perimeter of the garden remain. Because the rose garden [58] and sculpture garden are both recessed, the Chicago Park District installed a wooden ramp [60] that provides wheelchair access to the upper terrace area on the east.

In 1930, the South Park Commission erected the Gotthold Ephraim Lessing monument [61] in the center of the old rose garden. Renowned sculptor Albin Polasek selected the site for the monument and produced the bronze portrait of Lessing, an eighteenth century German playwright. The bronze figure sits on a granite base. Henry L. Frank, a German immigrant whose family became prominent in Chicago, provided the funds for the monument.

There is a children's playground [62] just north of E. 55th Street on the eastern perimeter of the park. Originally installed in 1956, this playground has been updated in the past decade or so. North of this is an area with lawn and many densely planted trees.

North of E. 54th Street, there are lawn bowling greens and a clubhouse building [63]. Constructed by the South Park Commission in 1930, the clubhouse is a one-story brick and stucco building with a limestone chimney that

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extends the length of the west façade. There is half-timbering on the stucco surfaces of the building. Although the building could be characterized as an example of the Tudor Revival style, for many years the community has called it the "Swiss Chalet." Perhaps this is due to the half-timbering and the building's cottage-like appearance. Over the years, lawn bowling became less popular and by the late 1970s, the sport was no longer played here. Sometime in the 1980s, the building was converted into a small restaurant. The restaurant closed and several years ago, the building suffered some interior fire damage. Today, the "Swiss Chalet" is vacant. It has been boarded up and awaits planning and funding for a new function and rehabilitation.

The General Richard L Jones Armory [64] is located north of the "Swiss Chalet." The South Park Commission transferred approximately 4 acres of land to the State of Illinois for the armory in 1928. Later that year, construction began on the massive 79,000 square foot building. Serving as the headquarters of the 124th Field Artillery, the building was considered one of the largest and finest armories in the nation. The massive Art Deco style building was designed by Perkins, Chatten, & Hammond. It has bold limestone facades with streamlined square towers flanking the entrance. The building facades are enlivened by bas relief panels with military motifs sculpted by Fred M. Torrey. The building has a flat roof with a vaulted roof in the center. The entrance to the building is on the north façade, with an arched doorway that includes an ornate black metal bas relief in the proscenium arch over the doors.

There is a large parking lot [65] north of the Richard L. Jones Armory. The parking lot, which is surrounded by black metal picket fencing was constructed in the 1980s. Its installation resulted in the removal of a short stretch of roadway known as Armory Drive, which extended from E. 52nd Street to Payne Drive. Historically, the ramble, one of the landscape features that had been designed by HWS Cleveland was located in this part of the park. It was a lush, rich, and dark area with masses of trees and shrubs and winding paths. The ramble was removed in 1894 and replaced with open landscape.

Despite many changes over the years, Washington Park retains a high level of integrity. Of all of the original South Park acreage, Washington Park best conveys Olmsted's original plan— especially considering that the Midway Plaisance never received the canal he envisioned, and that Jackson Park was redesigned two more times. While the park has adapted to many changing needs over the years, Olmsted's genius remains quite evident. Washington Park possesses one of Chicago's most beautiful historic landscapes, and continues to reflect Olmsted's American park legacy.

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Washington Park List of Historic Resources

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Designer/ Arch.</u>	<u>Feature #</u>
Contributing Features			
Buildings:			
Field House	1953-55	Ralph H. Burke	40
SE Comfort Station	1904	SPC	12
NE Comfort Station	1936	CPD	22
Refectory	1892	Burnham & Root	34
Grandstand	1936	CPD	35
Armory Building	1928	Perkins, Chatten & Hammond	64
Stables/ Roundhouse	1880	Burnham & Root	52
Lawn Bowling Clubhouse ("Swiss Chalet")	1930	SPC	63
SPC Administration (now DuSable Museum)	1911	D. H. Burnham & Co.	53
Center Maintenance Bldg. (Sawtooth Roof)	1894	SPC	46
East Maintenance Bldg. (Sawtooth Roof)	1894	SPC	47
NE Maintenance Bldg.	1894/1903	SPC	48
South/ West Bldg. (incl. old and new garage)	1903/07/36	SPC	49
Electrical Power House	1907	SPC	50
Laundry	1892	SPC	51

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Site (consists of the following elements that count as one site)--

Landscape	1871- 1954	Olmsted & Vaux, HWS Cleveland SPC Olmsted Brothers CPD	1, 2, 3, 6, 11, 13, 16, 20, 33, 54
Mere	1886/ 1904/ 2003	Olmsted & Vaux SPC Wolff, Clements & Assoc.	5
Pool	1880	Olmsted & Vaux	14
Public Forum	1936	CPD	32
Structures			
Fountain of Time	1922	Lorado Taft	4
North Bridge	1915/ 1970	SPC CPD	8
South Bridge	c.1935/ 1970	CPD	7
2 North Tennis Courts	c.1936	CPD	26
Casting Pier	1954	CPD	15
Art Deco Light Towers	1936	CPD	36
13 West Tennis Courts	1911	SPC	43
2 Granite Fountain Basins (Mall)	1911	Olmsted Bros./ unknown French Co.	17
2 Granite Fountain Basins (Admin. Bldg. Terrace)	1912	South Park Commissioners	56

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Refectory Parking Lot	1892	SPC/ CPD	39
NE Parking Lot	1938	CPD	24
Field House Parking Lot	c. 1953	CPD	44

Objects

Ulysses S. Grant Boulder	1879	SPC	23
Ephraim Lessing Mon.	1930	Albin Polasek	61
2 Garden benches	1912	SPC	59
2 Stone Fence Posts	c. 1925	SPC	42
W Light Fixture	c. 1890	SPC	30
E. Light Fixture	c.1890	SPC	55

Non-contributing Features

Buildings

Dyett School	1972	David N. Haid / Kenneth Childers	27
Dyett Natatorium	1972	David N. Haid/ Kenneth Childers	28
Boat Shelter	2003	Wolff, Clements & Assoc.	18

Sites

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Structures

Concrete Play Slab	1971	CPD	25
Dyett School Parking Lot	1972	David N. Haid/Kenneth Childers	29
Swimming pool	1992	A. Epstein & Sons	37
Pool w/ slide	1992	A. Epstein & Sons	38
NW Playground	c. 1960	CPD	31
55 th St. Playground	1956	CPD	62
60 th St. Playground	c. 1960	CPD	45
8 West. BB Courts	c. 1960	CPD	66
Aquatic Center Playground	c. 1925	SPC/CPD	41
SE Cove Board Walk	2003	Wolff, Clements & Assoc.	9
S Island Board Walk	2003	Wolff, Clements & Assoc.	10
West Board Walk	2003	Wolff, Clements & Assoc.	19
Wooden ramp	c. 1980	CPD	60
Parking Lot north of the Armory	c. 1980	State of IL	65

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Objects

5 H. Washington Boulders	1990	CPD	21
4 <i>Spirit of DuSable</i> sculptures	1977	Ausbra Ford, Geraldine Cullough Jill Parker, Lawrence E. Taylor	57
2 granite plaques (Fountain of Time)	1966	CPD	67

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Statement of Significance

Washington Park meets Criterion A and Criterion C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Conceived in the late 1860s as part of Chicago's original park and boulevard system, the 367-acre site was established as the Western Division of South Park, a 1055-acre landscape now known as Washington and Jackson Parks and the Midway Plaisance. The South Park Commission, an independent governmental agency chartered by the State of Illinois in 1869 created Washington Park. Nationally renowned landscape designer Frederick Law Olmsted and his partner, architect Calvert Vaux, prepared the original plan for the entire South Park. Today, Olmsted is widely considered the "Father of American Landscape Architecture." Designer of New York's Central Park; Riverside, Illinois—the seminal planned community; scenic reservations such as the Yosemite Valley; governmental and university campuses including the US Capitol grounds; and many of the nation's most beautiful and prominent public parks, Olmsted helped shape the American landscape. Washington Park is one of only a few Chicago landscapes designed by this influential figure.

Washington Park qualifies for listing on the National Register under the multiple documentation form, "The Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District." The property possesses national significance spanning from 1872 to 1954. This encompassed the period in which initial improvements were made at the north end of the park, through the entire period of permanent improvements until the current fifty-year cut-off date for the National Register of Historic Places.

In the late 1860s, a group of prominent Chicago businessmen began drafting legislation to create an enormous park on suburban land just south of the city. While these civic leaders believed that a large public park would help Chicago become a refined, attractive, and livable city, there was disagreement regarding the specific site to be dedicated as parkland. In addition, working-class residents were reluctant to support the issue because they did not want additional taxation. The State Legislature approved a bill presented in 1867, but it was voted down when it went to public referendum. As this was occurring, there was a growing parks movement throughout the city. In 1869, three separate State bills were submitted to establish three independent park systems on the south, west, and north sides of the city. The State legislature adopted the bills, resulting in the formation of the South, West, and Lincoln Park Commissions. Although these were independent agencies, the idea was to create a series of interlinking parks and boulevards that would encircle the outskirts of Chicago.

As explained in section E (page 3) of the multiple property nomination form "The Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District," the South Park Commission served a geographic region spanning from the Chicago River south to 138th Street and from Lake Michigan west to Cicero Avenue. Its jurisdiction included the towns of South Chicago, Lake, and Hyde Park. The South Park Commission's enabling legislation specified the boundaries of the 1055-acre site that would be designated as parkland. The site included a 593-acre division at the east along Lake Michigan and between 56th and 67th Streets, a 372-acre division west of Cottage Grove Avenue between 51st and 60th Street, and wide 90-acre swath connecting the two divisions. (These areas later became known as Jackson Park, Washington Park, and the Midway Plaisance.)

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Several leading Chicagoans who had helped launch the local parks movement had become personally acquainted with Frederick Law Olmsted and they wanted him to design the South Park Commission's new park and boulevards. In May of 1869, Olmsted and Vaux were in-town working on the Riverside project. Some of the newly appointed South Park Commissioners asked Olmsted to tour the site designated for as parkland and to make informal design recommendations.¹ In October of that year, when Vaux had returned to the area from the East Coast, he met with South Park Commissioner Paul Cornell to discuss details including a fee for the design services. After "some hesitation" the commissioners agreed to Olmsted and Vaux's fee of \$4000.²

Although Olmsted believed that a park and boulevard system would be an important improvement for the city, he was less than enamored with Chicago's terrain and especially the site identified for South Park. He considered the site "extremely bleak" and asserted that: "if a search had been made for the least park-like ground within miles of the city, nothing better meeting the requirement could have been found."³ Olmsted wrote that the "first obvious defect of the site is that of its flatness."⁴ He also indicated that while there were a number of trees on the unimproved park ground, most were "struggling for existence," and the largest ones were "all decrepit."⁵

Despite Olmsted's disdain for the "low, flat, miry and forlorn character" of the Midwestern landscape, he did believe it had certain advantages.⁶ He asserted that in Central Park one of the most expensive aspects of the construction project was the reduction of large portions of rolling terrain "to a prairie-like simplicity."⁷ This allowed for a "large meadowy ground, of an open, free and tranquil character" which Olmsted considered one of the most important elements of a park in "any great city" because it would provide "an antithesis to its bustling, paved, rectangular, walled-in streets."⁸

Olmsted's landscape design compositions often combined the "Beautiful and the Picturesque—the classic modes of English landscape gardeners of the late eighteenth century."⁹ These two landscape styles not only resulted in pleasing aesthetic effects, but also produced specific psychological responses within the viewer. For instance, the "Beautiful" also known as the "Pastoral" or the "Graceful" style, often conveyed through bright open meadows edged with shrubs and tree groves, would make a park visitor feel calm and relaxed. On the

¹ Daniel Bluestone, *Constructing Chicago*, Yale University Press, New Haven: 1991, 39.

² Victoria Post Ranney, *Olmsted in Chicago*, Open Lands Project, Chicago: 1972, 26.

³ Olmsted, Frederick Law. "The Landscape Architecture of the World's Columbian Exposition." *Inland Architect* 22, no. 2 (September 1893): 18-21.

⁴ Olmsted, Vaux & Co., landscape architects. *Report Accompanying Plan for Laying Out the South Park*. Chicago South Park Commission, March, 1871, 10.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Olmsted, Vaux and Company, *The Preliminary Report upon the Proposed Suburban Village at Riverside, near Chicago*, New York, 1868, 1.

⁷ Olmsted, Vaux and Company, 1871, 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁹ Charles E. Beveridge, "Frederick Law Olmsted's Theory of Landscape Design," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. 3, no. 2, Summer, 1977: 41.

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other hand, the "Picturesque" or "Sublime" style, conveyed through shadowy spaces or dramatic scenery such as mountains or lushly planted rambles, was meant to provide a sense of mystery or even anxiety for the person experiencing the landscape.

Olmsted and Vaux submitted the original plan for South Park in May of 1871. The plan was extremely detailed, and included a 38-page report explaining the designer's intentions. It identified the 372-acre portion as the Western or Upper Division (now Washington Park) and the 593-acre portion as the Eastern or Lower Division (now Jackson Park) and the wide swath connection the two as the Midway Plaisance.

The plan's central element representing the "Beautiful" style is a large meadow called the South Open Green. Located in the Western Division (Washington Park) this sunny open meadow is enclosed by a circuit drive and paths and edged with shrubs and trees. At approximately one hundred and fifty acres in size, Olmsted suggested that the South Open Green was "about the same as that of the Champ de Mars at Paris, and much larger than any parade or play ground thus far provided for anywhere in this country."¹⁰ This great meadow provided a large adaptable playfield for ball games and public gatherings. Olmsted suggested that sheep and cows should graze freely here. They would enhance the pastoral experience, keep the lawn mowed, and milk from the cows could be sold to park visitors.

Olmsted believed that Lake Michigan represented the "Sublime" style. He wrote:

"There is but one object of scenery near Chicago of special grandeur or sublimity, and that, the Lake, can be made by artificial means no more grand or sublime. ... The Lake may, indeed be accepted as fully compensating for the absence of sublime or picturesque elevations of land."¹¹

Lake Michigan provided strong inspiration for the South Park plan, particularly at the Eastern Division (Jackson Park), where the lakeshore defined the eastern edge of the park. Olmsted proposed reshaping the marshes and sand bars of the natural site into an intricate system of lagoons with densely planted irregular banks, islands, and peninsulas. This lush, rich waterway would emulate "the tropics, where intricate shores were densely overhung with foliage."¹² The plan anticipated that boats would enter the park from Lake Michigan and navigate through the rugged and shadowy lagoon system. Olmsted envisioned a long formal canal that would flow down the center of the Midway Plaisance linking the Eastern Division's (Jackson Park) waterway to a smaller lagoon in the Western Division (Washington Park.) This canal was never executed, however.

By the spring of 1871, when Olmsted and Vaux submitted the original plan for South Park, the commissioners

¹⁰ Olmsted, Vaux and Company, 1871, 21.

¹¹ Ibid, 10.

¹² Victoria Post Ranney, "Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing for Democracy in the Midwest," *Midwestern Landscape Architecture* (W. Tishler, ed.), 2000, 49.

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had been working on land acquisition for more than a year. They were quickly discovering that "land cost much more than had been anticipated" and that the amount of funding dedicated to "improvement and maintenance was very inadequate."¹³ Despite the financial difficulties, the commissioners began some initial improvements to some of the property that had already been acquired, particularly at the Western Division. The commissioners developed approximately five acres as a nursery, planting approximately 60,000 trees ranging from 1 to 4 inches in diameter. Construction of a new drive at the north end of the Western Division to connect Drexel and Grand (Martin Luther King Drive) boulevards commenced. An existing frame house purchased along with some of the land near Grand Boulevard and 52nd Street was converted for use as the South Park Commission's General Superintendent's House.

On the evening of October 8, 1871, fire ignited in a barn on Chicago's west side. Over the next several days, it became an inferno, sweeping over more than three square miles of the city, killing 300 people, rendering 100,000 people homeless and destroying nearly 200 million dollars worth of property.¹⁴ The flames never made it as far south as South Park. While the commissioners were fortunate that the improved landscape was not destroyed, they suffered a major setback. Their downtown office, which housed important documents and record related to park administration and construction, was located within the Great Fire's path of destruction. "A nearly complete assessment roll, which was to assign holders of property adjacent to the park their share of park costs, burned."¹⁵

The South Park Commissioners experienced major financial difficulties during the Post Fire Period. All of the records had to be reconstructed. Owners were demanding costs for property that had been identified for park development, and they did not want to be paid in installments.¹⁶ Construction of South Park came almost entirely to a halt. The commissioners had to discharge nearly all of their employees except for a small park police force.¹⁷ The hardship caused by the Great Fire was compounded by a national economic depression known as the Panic of 1873. Commissioners Sidway and Bowen personally provided as much money as they could, and Sidway, who was President of the Illinois Trust and Savings Bank, secured a major loan for the South Park Commission from the bank.¹⁸ Friends of the commissioners who were prominent citizens from the East Coast also arranged for loans.

The commissioners were determined to continue improving South Park so that at least some portion of the ground could be opened to the public. In the late summer of 1872, the South Park Commissioners decided to hire landscape architect Horace WS Cleveland to make some modifications to Olmsted's plan and oversee

¹³ L.D. Sidway, previous South Park Commissioner, excerpted from a letter he wrote in 1909. This is reprinted in *The Historical Register of the Twenty-two Superceded Park Districts*, Daniel H. Breen, ed., WPA Project #30260, 1941, 391.

¹⁴ These facts were obtained on-line at www.thegreatfire.com.

¹⁵ Victoria Post Ranney, *Olmsted in Chicago*, Open Lands Project, 1972, 32.

¹⁶ William W. Tishler, "Horace Cleveland: The Chicago Years," *Midwestern Landscape Architecture* (W. Tishler, ed.) Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000, 33.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ LD Sidway, 391.

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construction. Cleveland was a good candidate for this position. He had joined Olmsted's office in 1868. Although he worked for the firm for only one season, he was responsible for an important project—supervising the planting of Prospect Park in Brooklyn.¹⁹ Cleveland settled in Chicago in 1869, and began designing landscapes such as an extension to Graceland Cemetery, improvements to the University of Chicago grounds, and the original plan and layout for Highland Park, Illinois.

The South Park Commissioners appointed Cleveland as landscape architect in September of 1872, at an annual salary of \$2,400.²⁰ Due to the commission's severe financial difficulties, they asked Cleveland to make some alterations to Olmsted's original plan for South Park. According to Cleveland:

"I was instructed to confine myself exclusively to such works as were immediately and essentially necessary, and especially to make such changes of the original design as would obviate the necessity of making extensive alterations of the natural surface."²¹

One of the most obvious alterations to Olmsted's plan was the elimination of the canal that was intended for the Midway Plaisance. (The commissioners revisited this again about twenty-five or thirty years later, and though some excavation was done, the project was abandoned for a second time.)

By 1873, Drexel and Grand boulevards were improved with lawn, trees, walkways, and floral plantings. The earliest improvements to South Park began at the north end of the Western Division. Despite the modifications, Cleveland's work followed the character established by Olmsted and Vaux's plan. Construction of the South Open Green, a meadow "of open park scenery— of wood without undergrowth, and of lawn irregularly bounded by groups of large trees" was underway.²² Two circuit drives, a north loop and a south loop remained in Cleveland's plan as Olmsted had intended. The construction of the north loop began in the early 1870s, and much of the south loop was complete within the decade.

At the northeast side of the park, Cleveland designed a small ramble. This was an area of intricate and irregular plantings, winding paths, and small swaths of lawn on which children could play. Lush, dark, and shadowy, this space represented the "Sublime" style, and was similar to a larger ramble Olmsted created in New York's Central Park. Cleveland also installed a children's wading pond on the west side of the Western Division.

In the summer of 1873, thousands of people enjoyed the gardens and walkways on Drexel Boulevard. Carriages began making good use of both Drexel and Grand Boulevards as pleasure drives. By the end of the summer, the public enjoyed weekly band concerts in the park.

¹⁹ William W. Tishler, 27.

²⁰ Minutes of the South Park Commissioners, Sept. 17, 1872, v.1, p. 60 on file at the Chicago Park District.

²¹ HWS Cleveland, "Landscape Architect's Report," Annual Report of the Board of South Park Commissioners, Dec. 1873, 12.

²² Ibid, 17.

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The commission's financial problems continued, and in the fall of 1874, Cleveland's position was eliminated. Despite Cleveland's dismissal, progress on the park continued, though at a slow pace. By the end of 1874, the commissioners had acquired 780 acres of the South Park site and 250 acres of the Western Division landscape had been graded and planted. The following year, the South Open Green lawn and surrounding trees were completed, and 30 pure-blood Southdown sheep were purchased to graze on the meadow. A fenced sheepfold with sheds was built near the nursery, and a shepherd was hired to tend to the sheep. Other improvements to the Western Division include an ornamental bandstand, carriage shelters, and a botanical garden with three green houses used to propagate floral material for the park and boulevards. There was also the Park Retreat, from which park visitors could purchase ice cream and other light refreshments.

The park had fashionable Victorian amenities, such as rustic seats in the ramble, and rustic vases and birdcages placed near the Park Retreat. A 2-acre lake was built in a swale surrounded by scattered native oak trees. The Lincoln Park Commissioners donated a pair of swans to grace the waterway, and a swan-house was built on a small island in the middle of the lake. Following Olmsted's original recommendations, the commissioners built a deer paddock on the east side of the park.

By the late 1870s, the Kenwood, Oakland, and Hyde Park suburban communities surrounding South Park had developed into fashionable neighborhoods. Kenwood had become known as the "Lake Forest of the South Side."²³ The Western Division of South Park was one of the area's premier attractions. In December of 1879, the South Park Commission held a ceremony in honor of a visit by General Ulysses S. Grant, 18th President of the United States. A group of approximately 150 met at the Palmer House downtown and formed a procession of carriages that accompanied General Grant to South Park. They arrived at the north end of the Western Division where a memorial elm tree was to be planted. Commissioner Morgan asked General Grant to plant the tree "as a symbol of peace and good fellowship to all," stating "may it live and grow, even as you are growing in the hearts and affections of the people. We will all remember that this tree was planted with the same hand that stemmed the tide of Civil War and dissolution and cemented the Union in one glorious nation."²⁴ Grant took the spade, planted the tree, and made a short speech where he suggested that as the elm grows it would symbolize "the growth and prosperity of your beautiful city."²⁵ A large granite boulder commemorates the site, however, the elm had to be cut down in 1938.

The South Park Commission began construction of the Stables/ Roundhouse building near Cottage Grove Boulevard in the Western Division in 1879. Architects Burnham & Root designed, this rustic masonry structure. Completed in 1880, this is the oldest existing building in the park. It original provided facilities to stable approximately 60 horses, and space for the storage of phaetons and sprinkling carts.²⁶ The commissioners later remodeled the building to accommodate more than 100 horses. Even after the automobile became popular, the

²³ Alice Sinkevitch, ed. *The ALA Guide to Chicago Architecture*, Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1993, 400.

²⁴ n.a., "Grant Boulder," Unpublished manuscript, Chicago Park District Special Collections, ca. 1935.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners, Dec. 1, 1880, 7.

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stables housed horses used by the mounted police, supply and delivery wagons, street sweeping and sprinkling, and the University of Chicago artillery unit.

In 1880, the South Park Commissioners passed a resolution to ask the public for suggestions to give names to the "parks now commonly called the East and West respectively."²⁷ It is unclear as to whether the selected names came from the public or not. On February 9, 1881, the South Park Commissioners officially designated the Eastern Division as Jackson Park in honor of Andrew Jackson, seventh American president, and Western Division as Washington Park for George Washington, founding father and first president of the United States.

The original plan for Washington Park did not include any substantial area for fanciful gardens; however, this was an amenity that several park commissioners wanted in the park. The board had formed a Botanical committee in the mid 1870s, and had begun collecting seeds, bulbs, and plants from important Botanical gardens in other cities including Vienna, Amsterdam, and Calcutta.²⁸ Although the Botanical Committee was eliminated in 1877, the gardens were developed on the east side of the park. The South Park Commission built a small hexagonal conservatory in the gardens in 1882.

The South Park Commission had largely completed the Western Division landscape substantially following Olmsted & Vaux's original plan by the mid 1880s. The South Open Green strongly conveyed Olmsted's design intention, although the commissioners had discontinued the sheep in 1880. (The sheep were later re-introduced.)

In addition to halting the practice of sheep grazing on the meadow, the commissioners eliminated the deer paddock in 1883. Strangely enough, however, around the same time, the commissioners accepted the donation of 6 alligators. The commissioners had a pool constructed in Washington Park for these exotic animals. Although this was considered the beginnings of a zoological collection for the park, no other animals were added and the alligators were presented to the Lincoln Park Zoo in the early 1890s.

Work completed in Washington Park by 1886 included excavating the 22-acre lake at the southeast side of the park, which Olmsted had named the Mere. Crossing the Mere was a bridge that led to a large peninsula jutting into the Mere. West of the Mere, Olmsted designed a tree-lined mall (a feature that also appears in the Central Park plan). The formality of this allée was reinforced by rows of ornamental light fixtures. In the park's original plan, the area at the center of the Mall was identified as a place for games and exhibitions. The grading, walkway installation, and landscape improvements for the Mall were undertaken in 1884 and 1885. In 1886, two lawn tennis courts were added in this area. Two years later, the South Park Commission constructed a covered boat landing on the west side of the Mere near the Mall. Rowboats could be rented here, and in winter, there was curling on the frozen Mere and the boat landing provided a shelter for curlers.

²⁷ Minutes of the South park Commissioners, Oct. 6, 1880, v. 2, 266.

²⁸ Daniel H. Breen, ed. *The Historical Register of the Twenty-two Superseded Park Districts*, WPA Project #30260, 1941: 398.

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In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Washington Park increasingly provided recreational opportunities to park visitors. The South Open Green had always been intended for ball games, and in 1888, the first three baseball diamonds were constructed in the large meadow, with four more added the following year. Soon football fields and a cricket pitch were provided there as well. Bridle paths had been part of the park since its early construction, and in 1889, the South Park Commission built a "speedway" used to exercise horses and for horses and carriages to drive at a fast pace. This straight roadway was located on the west side of the park between Garfield Boulevard and 60th Street.

After Congress selected Chicago as host city for an international celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America, Frederick Law Olmsted recommended Jackson Park as the site for the fairgrounds. Olmsted, his associate Henry Sargent Codman, and consulting architects, Daniel Burnham and John Welborn Root collaboratively developed the layout for the fairgrounds. The scheme included a formal architectural court of water that flowed into a more naturalistic lagoon system encircling a wooded island, "characterized by calmness and naturalness, to serve as a foil to the artificial grandeur and sumptuousness of the other parts of the scenery."²⁹ Root died suddenly in January of 1891, and Burnham, who had been appointed Chief of Construction, carried on without his valued partner, assembling some of the nation's most significant architects and artists to create the White City.

In the summer of 1891, the South Park Commissioners received a letter from the World's Columbian Exposition Board of Directors requesting that the Midway Plaisance and Washington Park be set aside for use of the fair. The commissioners strongly opposed the idea of allowing Washington Park to become part of the grounds of the World's Columbian Exposition. They were reluctant to give up the site for the period of four years, which they estimated as the minimum time it would take before it would be returned to usable parkland. The commissioners were also opposed to destroying improved landscape for the purposes of the fair. After a heated debate that lasted many months, "the World's Fair authorities concluded to make use of Jackson Park and the Midway only," and the controversy was resolved.³⁰

With the boundary of the fairgrounds placed at the west end of the Midway Plaisance, it was clear that many of the millions of fairgoers would drive through or wander into Washington Park. The commissioners made several improvements to enhance the park prior to the official opening of the World's Columbian Exposition on May 1, 1893. They expanded and improved the Washington Park's gardens, which were located near the existing conservatory north of the stables building. Frederick Kanst, the South Park Commission's landscape gardener followed the popular Victorian method of "carpet bedding." His showy garden featured a massive three-dimensional globe with a map of the continents, surrounded by smaller globes on pedestals. In all,

²⁹ Frederick Law Olmsted, "The Landscape Architecture of the World's Columbian Exposition." *Inland Architect* 22, no. 2 (September, 1893): 20.

³⁰ Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners for the Year 1890, 1891: 10.

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approximately 300,000 annuals and perennials were used in the two-acre garden.³¹

Landscape improvements were made throughout the park, including the installation of more than 4,550 shrubs and 1,100 larger trees in 1892.³² The following year, 1,500 shrubs were removed from the south side streets and another 2,500 shrubs were obtained from canal banks near Willow Springs. These thousands of shrubs were then planted around the edges of the South Open Green and along the outer edges of the Mere.³³

The commissioners also constructed two new buildings in the park in 1892—one benefiting the public and the other supporting the operations of the park and boulevards. Architects Burnham & Root designed the more public building, known as the Refectory. The Classically derived structure was built on the concourse at an area identified for a pavilion in the original Olmsted & Vaux plan. Replacing the Park Retreat, razed which had been razed the year before, the Refectory provided a restaurant on the first floor and a refreshment room and General Superintendent's office on the second floor. The second building completed in 1892 was the Electric Light Plant, also known as the Power House. South Park Commission architects designed this brick structure that provided power for the lights along Drexel, Oakwood, and Garfield Boulevards as well as drives and buildings within Washington Park.

When the World's Columbian Exposition closed on October 30, 1893, it was clear that this had been one of the most significant events in Chicago and America's history. Forty-six different countries were represented at the fair, and visitors had come from all over the world. More than 20 million admissions to the fair had been purchased, with approximately 5 million more that were given without a charge.

"It is now evident that the White City was the focus of wide variety of nineteenth century advances related to the City Beautiful: sanitation; aesthetics; rationalized urban functions; women's involvement in culture, civic improvement, and urban reform; building design; artistic collaboration; architectural professionalism; and civic spirit."³⁴

The exposition had also brought substantial attention to Chicago, and particularly the south side.

After the fair, while the South Park Commissioners focused on transforming Jackson Park and the Midway Plaisance back to parkland, they also made some improvements to Washington Park and alterations to the landscape. The commissioners replaced the ramble at the northeast side of the park with open landscape. One of the Washington Park projects involved demolishing a dilapidated old frame carpenter and blacksmith shop building. In 1894, the South Park Commission replaced it with a new one-story complex constructed of bricks

³¹ Julia S. Bachrach, "Paradise Under Glass: Chicago's Historic Conservatories," in *Borderlands: The Shared Canadian and US Experience of the Landscape*. Proceedings of The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation Annual Meeting, June 2-5, 1999, 151.

³² Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners for the Year 1892, 1893: 8.

³³ Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners for the Year 1893, 1894:12.

³⁴ William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, The John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1989: 60.

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that had been taken from World's Columbian Exposition walks in Jackson Park. The new shop buildings had sawtooth roofs. In 1895, the commissioners constructed an addition to the Electric Powerhouse in order to accommodate new machinery needed for lighting the Midway Plaisance and Jackson Park.

Tropical plants that had been exhibited at the World's Fair were donated to the Washington Park Conservatory. To house this large collection, one of the propagating houses from the fair's Horticultural Building was dismantled and re-erected in Washington Park as an addition to conservatory in 1895. Two years later, the commission razed the existing conservatory and greenhouse facility. They replaced it with a handsome new structure designed by Lord & Burnham Company, the nation's premier conservatory builder. The long rectangular building had a fanciful central house with two smaller houses at the far ends. In this conservatory, South Park Commission horticulturalists planted in beds in the ground, an innovative approach during this early period in conservatory history.³⁵ (The Chicago Park District demolished this conservatory in the mid 1930s). The conservatory sat on a terrace with stairs leading down to a newly improved sunken garden to its west.

By the mid 1890s, the commissioners needed a more substantial office building. In 1897, South Park Commission staff moved an old phaeton cottage, which was no longer in use, to the east side of the park near 57th Street, and constructed a new wing matching the dark masonry of the original building. Fine interior details from the World's Columbian Exposition's German Building were installed in the wing providing a beautifully finished Board Room for the commissioners. At the same time, the commissioners converted their old offices at east end of the refectory to a soda fountain.³⁶

In the 1890s, some of the most affluent residents of the neighborhoods surrounding Washington Park began to move away, and Irish Catholics, second generation German Jews, and upper middle-class Yankees settled in the area. At this time, the Washington Park Club, an 80-acre private horse-racing club just southwest of the park was reaching its peak. During winters, the club often helped the South Park Commissioners by allowing horses from Washington Park to use their grounds.³⁷ Patrons of the racetrack not only enjoyed Washington Park's amenities, but also frequented other gathering places in the community. For instance, Sans Souci Park, a beer garden, opened in 1899 at 60th St. and Cottage Grove. (This was replaced by Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Midway Gardens in 1915, known later as Edelweiss Garden, and demolished for a gas station in 1929). In the early 1900s, elite neighborhood residents increasingly moved away and the Washington Park Club closed down in 1908.

In the 1900s, the South Park Commissioners continued making improvements to Washington Park's landscape. In 1900, South Park Commission landscape gardener Frederick Kanst supervised the installation of a new rose garden north of the conservatory. Two years later, a group of prominent Chicagoans donated funding for a George Washington monument. They commissioned a duplicate of an equestrian George Washington

³⁵ Julia S. Bachrach, "Paradise Under Glass: Chicago's Historic Conservatories," 151.

³⁶ Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners for the Year 1897, 1898: 10.

³⁷ Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners for the Year 1900, 1901: 15.

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sculpture that had been produced by artists Daniel G. French and Edward C. Potter and installed in Paris. The South Park Commissioners paid for the foundation and preparation of the site on the boulevard northwest of the entrance to Washington Park and the monument was installed in 1904. (The monument sits just outside the boundaries of the park on City of Chicago property.)

At the turn of the twentieth century, the commissioners tried to respond to the public's increasingly demands for new and expanded recreational opportunities in Washington Park. In 1902, a new boathouse was constructed at the Mere, replacing the earlier boat landing. This classically designed structure provided two sheltered areas for boats to dock, and an interior space with bathrooms, coatrooms, and a kitchen. The building served as a shelter for curling and ice-skating in the winters. The South Open Green not only provided cricket courts, baseball and football fields; but the commissioners installed a nine-hole golf course there in 1902. They also made a rule that year that the ball fields and golf course could not be used on Sundays. Due to numerous objections to this rule, the commissioners rescinded it in 1905. They also discontinued golf at the time, and installed an archery range on the east side of the park near the carpenter's shops. This was one of Chicago's first public archery ranges.

In 1904, the South Park Commission excavated the wide isthmus in the Mere to transform the peninsula into a large island. This allowed boaters and skaters to make a complete circuit around the island. The alteration to the waterway included an intricate serpentine extension of the waterway on the northeast side of the Mere. The commissioners provided other improvements as part of the Mere extension. A rustic bridge was built to provide access to the island. A new small brick comfort station provided bathrooms to boaters, skaters, and park patrons.

Two years later, the South Park Commissioners decided to reintroduce sheep in Washington Park for the first time since 1880. Staff members built new fold and pen on the island, and a man was hired to tend the sheep. The large flock of South Down sheep was sold at the end of the fall, and the revenue from the sale was used to purchase a new flock the following year. The commissioners continued purchasing new sheep to graze in Washington Park each year until 1920, when the practice was discontinued.

During this period, the South Park Commission modernized and enlarged its operations buildings. Additions were made to the shops complex in 1903 and 1907. The commissioners also erected a new Electric Power House adjacent to the old structure. The three-story brick building included a 200 feet tall chimneystack. Modernized equipment was installed, and the new facility began providing power to Washington, Jackson and several new small south side parks in 1907.

The Commissioners continued to make improvements to the recreational facilities in Washington Park. In 1909, they added roque courts (a form of croquet) west of the new Power Station. The horse speedway at the west side of the park was removed in 1911 and replaced with 27 tennis courts. Washington Park storehouse included an ice cream factory that manufactured all of the syrups and ice cream for all of the South Park

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Commission lunch counters and refectories. In 1909, this ice cream factory produced more than 30,000 gallons and 1,700 gallons of syrup.³⁸

In 1909, the South Park Commissioners began constructing a new administrative headquarters building in Washington Park. Designed by D.H. Burnham & Co., the structure was built just south of the conservatory and gardens on the east side of the park. Construction of the Classically rendered one story building was completed in the fall of 1910. The commissioners began to occupy their new offices on December 10, 1910. The following year, work began on the site around the new Administration Building. This included the creation of a terrace and sunken garden to the north. The terrace had Classical balustrades, fountains, and urns.

As headquarters of the entire South Park System, Washington Park included facilities supporting the other parks in addition to administrative offices. A central electrical power station had operated in the parks since the 1890s. When the new Electric Power House was completed in 1906, the South Park Commission vacated the adjacent old power house building. In 1914, the commissioners demolished the old building, replacing it with a new brick structure serving as a central laundry. By 1916 more than 4 million pieces were laundered in the facility annually, and 225,000 garments were repaired.

During this period, Frederick Law Olmsted's sons were contracted by the South Park Commission to work on various south side parks including improvements to Washington Park. The Olmsted Brothers advised the South Park Commissioners and Superintendent J. Frank Foster on many matters regarding Washington Park such as design details for the terrace and garden adjacent to the Administration Building; appropriate types of trees to plant in various locations; the style of fountains to be added to the north and south ends of the Mall. The Olmsted Brothers suggested the installation of ornamental fountains with circular basins similar to a pair of fountains at the Rond Pointe on the Champs Elysées in Paris. In 1911, the commissioners purchased the fountains from a Parisian company and installed them in circular basins at the extreme ends of the Mall. The following year, the terrace, conservatory garden, and rose garden received additional improvements. Classical balustrades and smaller fountains with circular basins were installed on the terrace flanking the entrance to the new Administration Building. Elegant benches lined the terrace and were placed in the rose garden.

In 1915, the commissioners demolished the rustic bridge located on the north side of the island. They replaced it with a new pedestrian bridge designed by in-house South Park Commission architects. Also considered the rustic bridge, the new structure's abutments were faced with red granite rubble. The decking was composed of timbers. Years later, the decking was rebuilt in concrete in metal.

During this period, Lorado Taft, one of Chicago's most renowned artists began to envision a large sculpture for Washington Park at the juncture of the Midway Plaisance. Sometime after the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, Taft (1860 - 1936) began sketches for an ambitious scheme to beautify the Midway Plaisance. Taft

³⁸ Annual Report of the South Park Commissioners for a Period of Twelve Months from March 1, 1908 to February 28, 1909, inclusive. 1909: 100.

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suggested dredging the Midway for a canal as Olmsted had suggested, and lining the proposed waterway with statues of the "world's greatest idealists."³⁹ His scheme placed three sculptural bridges to span the canal: the Bridge of the Arts, the Bridge of Sciences, and the Bridge of Religions. At the extreme ends of the broad boulevard he suggested two monumental sculptural fountains, the *Fountain of Creation* on the east end, and the *Fountain of Time* on the west end. Taft's proposal for the *Fountain of Creation*, featuring Greek mythical characters saved by Zeus after a great flood, was never built. The proposal for the *Fountain of Time*, however, began to progress when the committee for the Ferguson Fund, an endowment for public art administered by the Art Institute of Chicago, adopted the sculpture as a monument to commemorate an 1814 peace treaty between England and the United States.

Taft's ideas for *Fountain of Time* were inspired by a couplet written by the English poet, Austin Dobson: "Time goes, you say? Ah, no. Time stays, we go."⁴⁰ The poem inspired a crag-like figure representing "father time" encircled by a large group of human figures. He decided that a circle of mankind was too dull and difficult to view. So instead, he created an ominous cloaked figure overlooking a procession of 100 human figures including babies, children, soldiers, religious figures, workers, lovers, the elderly, and even a portrait of the artist himself. Taft's scheme included a formal reflecting pool lying between the figure of Time and the wave of humanity, meant to provide dramatic reflections of the sculptural figures.

Taft had wanted to execute the monument in stone, but thought it would be too expensive and difficult to carve. He began making inquiries to determine if it could be cast in concrete. He contacted the US Bureau of Standards in Washington DC, and they referred him to John J. Earley, who had developed a new process for building and sculpting in concrete. Earley (1881- 1945) is widely recognized for developing the "polychrome" process that involved adding small particles of aggregate or stone to vary the color and texture of the surface of the artwork or structure. Earley's mix of concrete was fluid enough to pour into a mold that had various shapes and forms. He also devised a process for extracting water from the concrete mix after it was poured into the mold. One of the Early's first uses of his technique was for the balustrades, walls, and stairs, of Meridian Hill Park in Washington DC.

Earley's technique seemed ideal for the *Fountain of Time*, because it would give the appearance of stone, but could be built by pouring concrete into a large mold. Taft created a life sized plaster model, which he installed on the actual location of the *Fountain of Time* on the Midway Plaisance. The piece was cast using a mold composed of 4,500 pieces. The hollow sculpture was built on a wooden infrastructure covered with iron mesh and a water absorbent coat of grey concrete, finished with exposed aggregate treated with an acidic brush-and-wash technique. Over the years, the Earley process has been used on numerous buildings, sculptures, bridges and other structures, including the Baha'i Temple in Wilmette, built in 1953. The method is still used today.

³⁹ Patrick Reynolds, "'Fra Lorado' Chicago's Master Sculptor," *Chicago History*, v. XIV, no. 2, Summer, 1985: 59.

⁴⁰ Ira J. Bach and Mary Lackritz Gray. *A Guide to Chicago's Public Sculpture*. University of Chicago Press, 1983:252.

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After Taft devoted fourteen years to this project, the *Fountain of Time* was completed and dedicated in 1922. Even before its completion, the *Fountain of Time* began receiving accolades. In 1921, *The Monumental News*, a national publication devoted to public art asserted that the *Fountain of Time* was the "most elaborate and imaginative work of purely ideal sculpture ever executed in this country if not in the world."⁴¹

In 1927, the State Legislature adopted *An Act Authorizing Park Commissioners to Acquire or Provide Sites for Armories for the National Guard and to Acquire or to Establish and Maintain Landing Fields for Aircraft*. Providing "a suitable home" for the 124th Field Artillery of the National Guard "worthy of its traditions and accomplishments" on the South side of Chicago was the dream of commanding officer Colonel Thomas S. Hammond.⁴² His brother, Charles Herrick Hammond, an architect and partner in the firm of Perkins, Chatten and Hammond, was part of a committee that made an application to designate a site in Washington Park for such a building. The South Park Commissioners adopted a resolution to provide the site for the armory, transferring 4 1/3 acres on the northeast side of the park to the State of Illinois in 1928. Perkins, Chatten & Hammond designed the large Art Deco armory building which included a training facility for the regiment, a riding arena that when used as an auditorium can seat 6,500 people, and housing facilities for large batteries of guardsmen.

The armory building which also serves as a World War I Memorial, has inscribed and bas relief panels depicting servicemen in uniform and other military motifs. Fred M. Torrey (1884- 1967) was responsible for the sculptural elements of the building. Torrey, who worked in Lorado Taft's studio was the sculptor of many important American artworks. He specialized in statues of Lincoln and his work includes bronze figures and bas relief plaques at the Lincoln Tomb, a Lincoln monument displayed at the 1939 World's Fair in New York, and the Lillie Gordon Munn Memorial in Topeka, Kansas.

The State of Illinois continues to operate the armory in Washington Park. In recent years, the State officially renamed the building in honor of General Richard L. Jones who commanded an infantry unit staffed entirely by African American officers formed because of racial discrimination in the military.

During the early 1930s, there were a few improvements made to Washington Park, despite the substantial economic hardship experienced by the South Park Commission as a result of the Great Depression. In November of 1930, the South Park Commission unveiled a monument to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. The monument was the gift of Henry L. Frank, a successful Chicago businessman and nephew of Michael Reese. Along with his brother, Frank had received a substantial inheritance that he devoted to many charitable causes including founding Michael Reese Hospital. Frank left \$25,000 in his will for a monument to the famous German poet known for religious tolerance to be erected in a South Side park. Albin Polesek, who had trained as a wood carver in Czechoslovakia and headed the School of the Art Institute's sculpture program from

⁴¹ n.a. "Our Largest Work of Ideal Sculpture," *The Monumental News*, Feb. 1921, 112.

⁴² Breen, ed. 1941: 414.

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1917 to 1943, sculpted the Lessing Monument.⁴³ The monument was installed in the sunken rose garden north of the conservatory.

In 1931, the South Park Commission installed a lawn bowling facility on the east end of the park near Cottage Grove Avenue. This included two bowling greens and a building to provide equipment storage and rental, bathrooms, and lounge. South Park Commission architects designed this brick building, which has long been nicknamed the "Swiss Chalet."

By the early 1930s, there were 22 separate park districts operating simultaneously in Chicago, including the South Park Commission. The Great Depression rendered all of these independent agencies financially insolvent. To gain access to federal funding through President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, voters approved the Park Consolidation Act of 1934, through which all 22 agencies were unified into the Chicago Park District. Between 1935 and 1941, the newly consolidated Chicago Park District received more than \$82 million in federal funding through the WPA (Works Progress Administration) and PWA (Project Works Administration). State and city funds increased this total to more than \$100 million.⁴⁴ Using these funds, the park district made numerous improvements throughout the system, which then included 130 parks with a total of 83 field houses and 50 swimming pools.

By the time that the Chicago Park District was formed in 1934, the neighborhood surrounding Washington Park had changed considerably. After World War I, many African American families from the rural south began settling on the south side of Chicago. An area around 35th and State Streets, known as "Bronzeville" or the "Black Metropolis" became a thriving community of middle class black residents, many of whom owned their own homes and businesses. In the 1920s and 1930s, this African American neighborhood began stretching to the south, and as whites moved out of the Washington Park community, black families replaced them. By 1930, the black population of the neighborhood was 92% of the total, and by 1940 it was 97%.⁴⁵

Administrators of the newly formed Chicago Park District began planning programs and improvements to Washington Park that would specifically address the needs of the community. In 1936, the park district remodeled the old refectory building into a major recreation center with an assembly hall, clubrooms, game rooms. Locker and changing rooms were also installed to accommodate a new outdoor aquatics facility that was created just south of the refectory. This consisted of three swimming pools, including the park district's first competition sized pool. Designed by Chicago Park District architects, the improvement included a large Art Deco style grandstand and light towers. Swimming lessons, aquatic competitions, and Olympic training were all provided at this new and expansive swimming complex.

⁴³ Ira J. Bach and Mary Lackritz Gray, *A Guide to Chicago's Public Sculpture*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, 26.

⁴⁴ Julia Sniderman Bachrach, *The City in a Garden: A Photographic History of Chicago's Parks*, Center for American Places, Harrisonburg, VA: 2001, 24.

⁴⁵ The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book Chicago Metropolitan Area*. University of Illinois: Chicago, 1984, 109.

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The Chicago Park District made other improvements to Washington Park to increase programming and provide conveniences. Tennis courts were installed on the north end of the park. On the west perimeter, the park district created a public speakers forum with benches and a flag pole to be used for community gatherings and other outdoor events. Following one of several design standards developed by the Engineering Department, the park district constructed an "English stone style" comfort station on the edge of the South Open Green. Other park improvements funded by the WPA include additions to the shops complex and maintenance yard.

In 1938, there was an article in the Chicago Park District's employee newsletter known as *Recreation News* entitled "Parks Offer Attractive Program to the Negroes," which described the swimming program along with a variety of other activities offered at Washington Park. These included various athletic programs and outdoor movies and concerts in the summer and ice skating and a community ice carnival in the winter. The Chicago Park District hired a staff largely composed of college educated African Americans to work at Washington Park.

Due to the consolidation of the Chicago Park District, the earlier park commission headquarters were no longer needed. Therefore, the park district converted the old South Park Commission's Administration Building into its central art department. The building provided studio space for 350 painters, sculptors, illustrators, and art teachers hired through funds from the WPA. As the old Stables and Roundhouse building was no longer needed to house workhorses, it was converted to a central Rigger & Drama Shop. Drama department employees made and stored scenery and props for plays staged in parks throughout the city.

The Chicago Park District conducted numerous other improvements to Washington Park using WPA funds. These included a new surface parking lot west of the Armory to serve the large number of people using the recreation fields. The Drexel Boulevard entrance was redesigned and roadways were widened. Park district laborers removed dead and diseased trees and planted thousands of new shrubs and trees. The rose garden was redesigned and replanted. By the mid 1930s, the Washington Park Conservatory's attendance rates had declined significantly, and the building suffered severe deterioration. The park district closed the building in August of 1936, and demolished it shortly thereafter.

By the late 1940s, Washington Park needed a field house. The nation's first field houses were conceived and built by the South Park Commission in 1905 in small parks located in densely populated tenement neighborhoods within a few miles of Washington Park. Based on the settlement house model, the field house provided a variety of athletic, social, and educational programs to the surrounding communities and allowed for year-round use of the city's parks. Although there were many field houses in parks throughout Chicago by the time of consolidation, some of the older parks such as Lincoln, Jackson and Washington, did not yet have one, and there was large demand from the community for these indoor facilities.

In 1950, the Chicago Park District hired consulting engineer Ralph H. Burke to begin developing plans for a field house in Washington Park. Burke had previously been a member of the Chicago Park District Engineering

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Department staff. Ground was broken in 1953 and most of the construction took place in 1954. Some of the tennis courts in the area west of the field house that had once been the speedway were converted to a parking lot for the field house. The park district dedicated the new facility on March 9, 1955. A staff of college educated African American instructors was headquartered in the field house. These employees provided classes in fitness and athletics, art craft, drama and music.

In the 1950s and 1960s some alterations and additions were made to Washington Park to provide greater recreational opportunities. In 1954, the park district built a concrete casting pier in the Pool. Both the Pool and Mere have been stock with fish for many decades and the pier provided greater access for fishermen. Some of the old speedway area on the west end of the park that had previously been converted into tennis courts was altered to provide basket ball courts. The park district constructed three playgrounds during this period. One is north of E. 55th Street on the eastern perimeter of the park. A second is on the south perimeter of the park near E. 60th street. A playground is located on the west edge of the park near the old Superintendent's house.

Unfortunately, the construction of this playground resulted in the removal of some of Washington Park's oldest features. Since the early construction of the park in the 1870s there was a small water feature here, listed invariably as a children's wading pool or a duck pond. In the late 1950s, the park district filled the pond, and on its site, built a new playground. The nearby Superintendent's house was razed. The demise of other historic features soon followed. In 1960, the park district removed the sunken rose garden. The following year, the northeastern serpentine portion of the Mere was filled.

During the late 1960s, the park district began exploring ways to better serve the growing population of children that resulted from the baby boom. On concept promoted at that time was to create new regional state-of-the art playgrounds that would excite and educate children. Designed and constructed by the Chicago Park District, the Marshall F. Bynum Adventure Playland opened on Washington Park's island in 1970. Designed to serve as many as 2500 children at one time, the playground included a pre-school area, creative construction area, moonscape area, mountain maze, fishing station, observation tower and other features. The Bynum Playland had a staff of 21 Chicago Park District recreation specialists. Although the park district had planned to open several playlands throughout the park systems, only Bynum was ever realized. Over the years, the level of staffing declined, equipment deteriorated, and the facility was not updated. The park district closed and removed the facility from the island in 1990.

The park district also constructed smaller, more traditional playgrounds in the 1950s and 1960s. These include a playground on the south perimeter of the park just north of E. 60th Street, and another one on the east perimeter of the park, just north of E. 55th Street. Both of these playgrounds were updated in the early 1990s.

The baby boom of the 1960s also created a demand for many new schools in Chicago. Through an agreement with the Public Building Commission, the Chicago Park District began transferring acreage from several parks to allow for the construction of new schools for the Board of Education. This Chicago Park- School Building

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Program, which was managed by the Public Building Commission of Chicago, continued in the 1970s. In 1970, the Chicago Park District's Board of Commissioners conveyed a portion of Washington Park to the Public Building Commission to allow for the construction of what was then known as Vincennes School. Completed in 1972, the facility became known as Walter H. Dyett Middle School. Following "careful guidelines" that were set forth by the Public Building Commission architects David N. Haid and Kenneth Childers created a complex that includes an academic building and a natatorium building with an indoor swimming pool, and a parking lot.⁴⁶ The steel frame structures have "dark, fully glazed skins."⁴⁷ During the school year, the Chicago Park District provides joint programming from the natatorium. The indoor swimming facility is closed in the summer, when Washington Park's outdoor pools are available.

By the 1960s, the former Administration Building was vacant. In 1967, the park district turned the building over to the Chicago Police Department for temporary use as a police station. The lovely terrace in front of the building became a parking lot for police cars. In 1971, a group of prominent south side artists and educators asked that the building become the permanent home of the DuSable Museum of African American History. A decade earlier, Margaret and Charles Burroughs founded the Ebony Museum of Negro History and Art, one of the nation's first cultural institutions devoted to black culture. Operating out of their own home, in 1968 they renamed the museum in honor of Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable, a Haitian fur trader who is recognized as Chicago's first permanent resident. In 1973, the new DuSable Museum of African American History in Washington Park had a formal dedication ceremony.

After moving into the Administration Building, the DuSable Museum converted the sunken garden just north of the terrace to the museum's sculpture garden. Dr. Margaret Burroughs had commissioned Robert Jones to sculpt a bust of DuSable some years earlier for the State of Illinois Centennial Exhibition. This was recast in bronze and installed on the terrace next to the museum. In 1977, the DuSable Museum received a grant from the City of Chicago for five additional abstract sculptures that were installed in the sunken garden. They are all abstract sculptures honoring DuSable and celebrating the city's African American heritage. Unfortunately, one of the sculptures was stolen in the early 1980s.

The institution has continued to grow and expand over the years, under the guidance of Dr. Margaret Burroughs, who has served as a Chicago Park District Commissioner since 1986. In 1992, the museum began construction on a large addition at the south side of the original Burnham-building. Architects Wendell Campbell & Associates designed the addition, which includes gallery space and 450-seat auditorium.

During the 1990s, Washington Park received a number of additional improvements. In 1990, the Chicago Park

⁴⁶ Alice Sinkevitch, ed. *The AIA Guide to Chicago Architecture*, A Harvest Original, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1993, p. 413.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

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District rededicated the historic South Open Green as the Harold Washington Common Ground. A perennial bed and commemorative markers were placed on the edges of the vast baseball meadow. The markers are inscribed with quotes from Frederick Law Olmsted and Harold Washington (1922-1987), Chicago's 42nd Mayor who served from 1983 to 1987.

In 1992, the Chicago Park District rehabilitated the historic refectory building and replaced the old swimming pools with a new aquatic center. A team of engineers and architects led by the firm of A. Epstein and Sons designed the new center. The swimming facility includes a large pool with a giant slide and adjoining adding area with spray fountains. There is a second pool with a giant slide. The rehabilitation incorporated the original Art Deco grandstand and light fixtures. Architects Hasbrouck, Peterson & Zimochs conducted the rehabilitation of the refectory, which included conserving the terra cotta colonnade, removing alterations from the 1930s, providing the restored rooms for community meetings, weddings, and special events. During the restoration work, a remnant of an original mosaic tile floor was found beneath a stairway. The park district conserved the remnant and incorporated it into the new flooring on the first floor of the building.

The Chicago Park District received a federal grant in 1996 to develop a wetland at the northwest side of the lagoon in Washington Park. This project included a great deal of community involvement. The park district has continued to undertake additional lagoon restoration in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This work has included recreating the serpentine extension added to the east side of the lagoon in 1904. In 2003, a 1.9 million dollar lagoon project is underway. This includes improved hydrology and drainage; new fishing stations and boardwalks; a small shelter in the location of the boathouse; perennial plantings, granite boulders, and benches in certain areas around the Mere; and landscape work near the Mall. In recent years, the park district has also made modest improvements to the Bynum Island including installing a small ropes course for adventure sports programs.

A devastating summer storm of July 6, 2003 resulted in the destruction of more than 200 trees in Washington Park. Chicago Park District landscape architects are reviewing historic plant lists and plans and tree replacement will be done in 2004 and 2005. Additional landscape improvements include a garden that will be installed at the southeast side of Washington Park at the west end of the Midway Plaisance. The garden will pay tribute to Dr. Allison Davis (1902- 1983) a University of Chicago psychologist and anthropologist who helped to end legalized segregation in America. Landscape architect Peter Lindsay Schaudt designed the Dr. Allison Davis Garden in the form of a sunken circle, making reference to the configuration of the circular basin in Olmsted's original plan (part of the water canal that was never executed). In addition the circular form was selected because it represents equality, a theme that relates well to Dr. Davis's contributions to the university, the community and the nation. The garden will include limestone steps inscribed with writings by Dr. Davis. It will include a combination of perennial and annual flowers.

Also in 2004, the DuSable Museum is working with the Chicago Park District to expand its operation into the nearby Stables and Roundhouse building. Plans for a \$75 million improvement are underway, which will

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address both buildings and will include new exhibit space, an auditorium, classrooms, administrative space, and underground parking. The expanded facility is expected to open to the public in 2006.

Today, remains as one of Chicago's most historically significant parks. While the park has changed and adapted to contemporary needs over the year, the park has continuously accomplished Olmsted's primary goals. He wanted to reduce the stress of urban life, provide democratic spaces where people of various backgrounds or income levels could come together, and to create places where people could commune with each other and with nature. According to historian Dr. Charles E. Beveridge, Olmsted also "...rejected mere decoration in order to create spaces meeting the social and psychological needs of Americans in a comprehensive and imaginative way."⁴⁸ Washington Park retains the genius of its original design and reflects the fact that Olmsted's vision is as important in the early 21st century as it was in the mid 19th century.

⁴⁸ Charles E. Beveridge, "Frederick Law Olmsted," in *American Landscape Architecture: Designers and Places*, William H. Tishler, ed. The Preservation Press, 1989, p. 41.

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Chicago Park District. *Shops and Garage General Plan, Washington Park*, August 24, 1937 (revised June 20,
1944).

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- Chicago Park District. *Washington Park*, April 12, 1939.
- Chicago Park District. *Washington Park*, 1940.
- Chicago Park District. *Plan of Archery and Old Men's Club, Washington Park*, April 4, 1942.
- Chicago Park District. *Washington Park Plot of Survey for Site of Proposed Field House*. Feb. 1950.
- Ralph H. Burke, Inc., *Washington Park Field House*, May 15, 1952.
- Chicago Park District. *Basketball Backstop Location*. June 26, 1956.
- Chicago Park District. *4' High Fence at 60th St. Playground*, June 11, 1963.
- Chicago Park District. *Fountain of Time- Lorado Taft Memorial Granite Plaque and Marker Tablets*, July 15, 1966.
- Chicago Park District. *New Concrete Tennis Courts & New Basketball Courts*. August 18, 1967.
- David N. Haid and Kenneth Childers, *Vincennes School Plan*, Building Program for Public Building Commission of Chicago, Sept. 4, 1970.
- Chicago Park District. *New Play Slab for Roller Skating, Washington Park*. May 12, 1971.
- Chicago Park District. *Washington Park Plot Plan*. July 17, 1979.
- A. Epstein & Sons, International Inc.; Heery Engineering, Inc.; Dubin, Dubin, & Moutoussamy; Duignan-Woods, Chartered; Hasbrouck, Peterson, Zimoch & Sirirattumrong; Lighting By Design, Inc., *Washington Park Refectory and Aquatic Center*, July 31, 1992.
- Chicago Park District. *Resurface Lot/ Drives (Stables Area) Washington Park*. July 16, 1998.
- Chicago Park District. *Planting Program (Refectory Area)*, Sept. 17, 1998.
- Chicago Park District. *Plot Plan of Washington Park*, 2003.
-

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Chicago Park District Special Collections

Chicago Historical Society Prints and Photographs Department

Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, MA

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Washington Park, Chicago

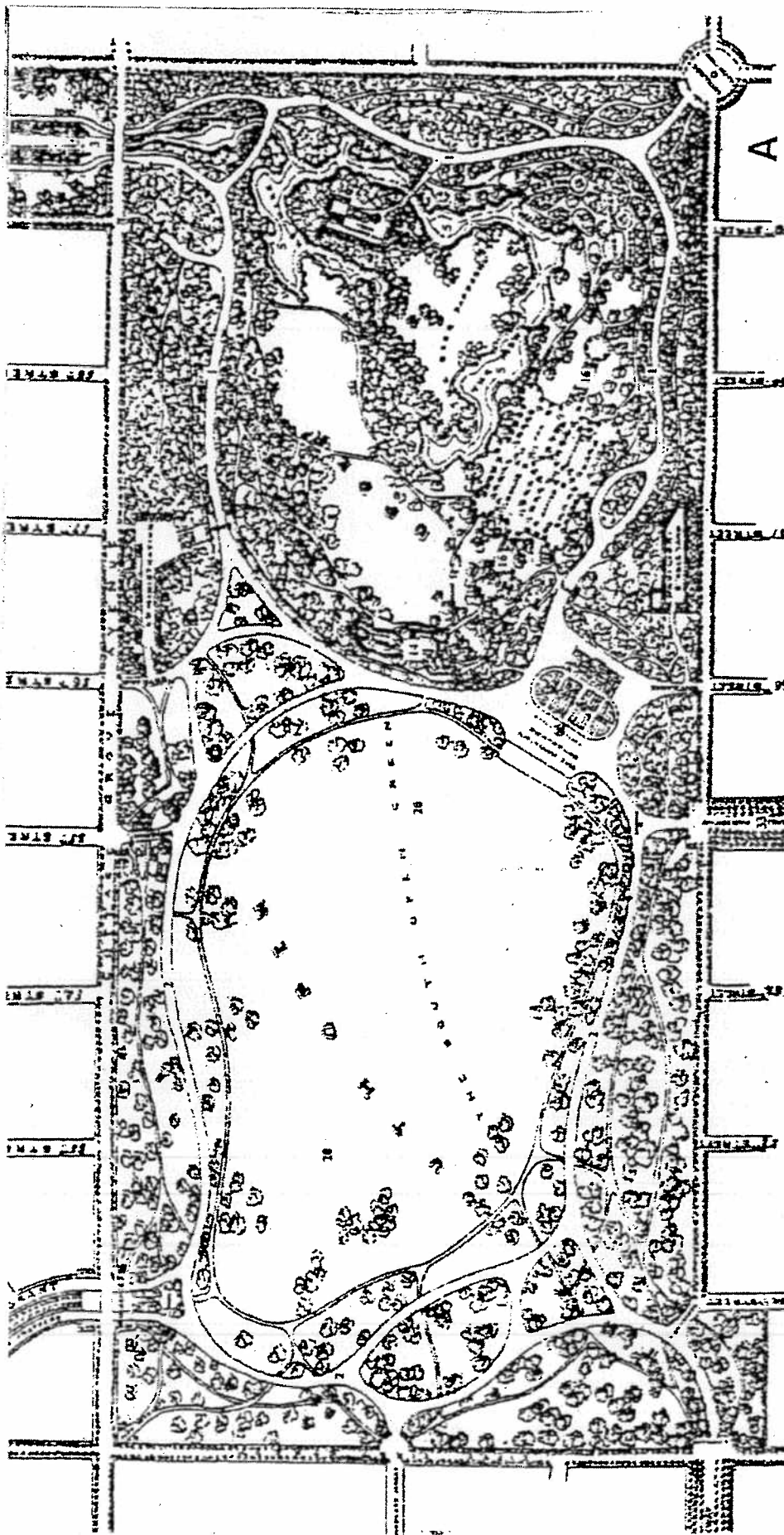
Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is bounded on the north by the south curb-line of East 51th Street, on the south by the north curb-line of E. 60th Street, on the east by west curb-line of Cottage Grove Ave., and on the west by the east curb-line of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive.

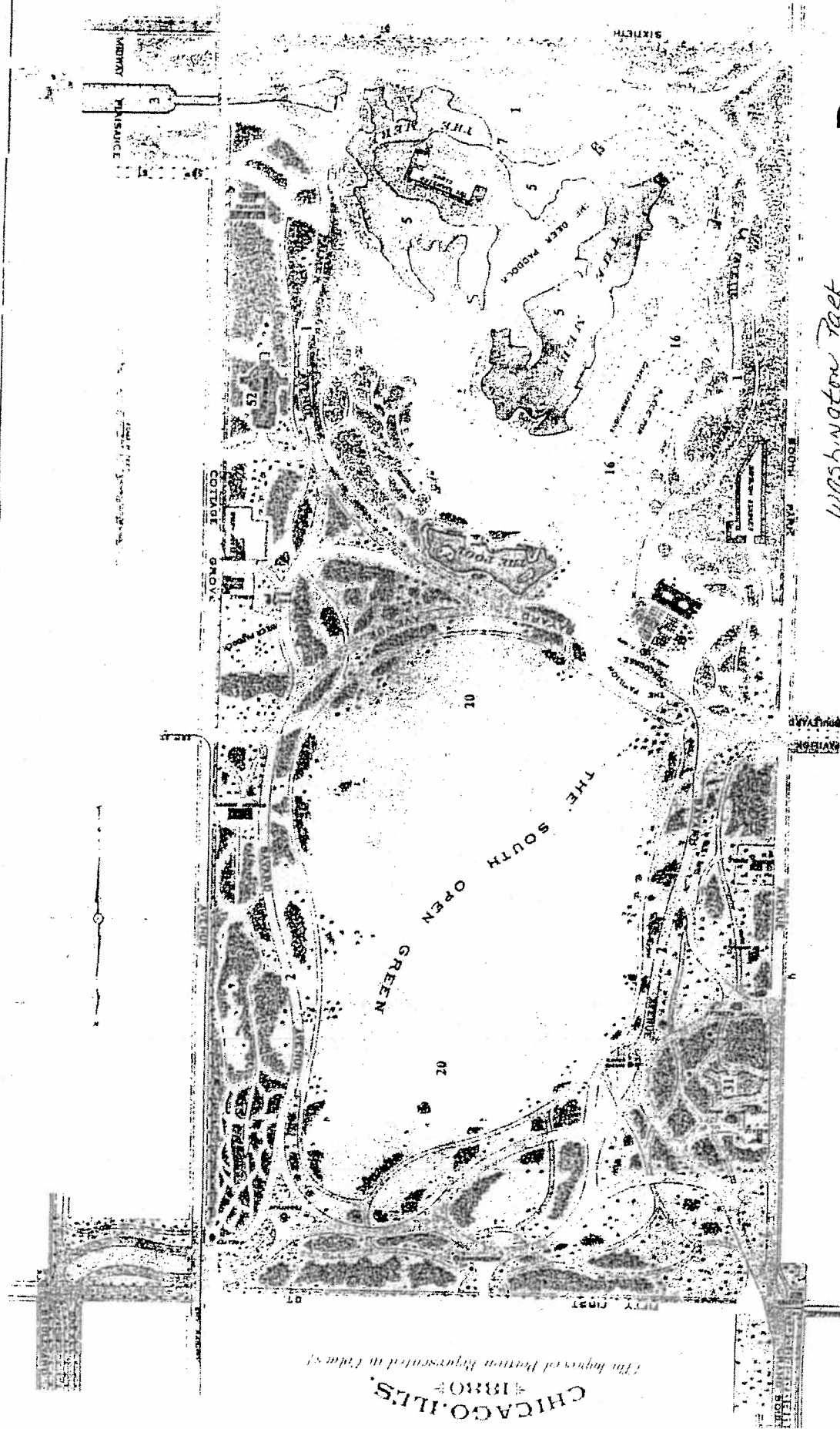
Boundary Justification

This the plot of land historically associated with the park during its period significance.



Washington Park
Chicago, IL

1871
map



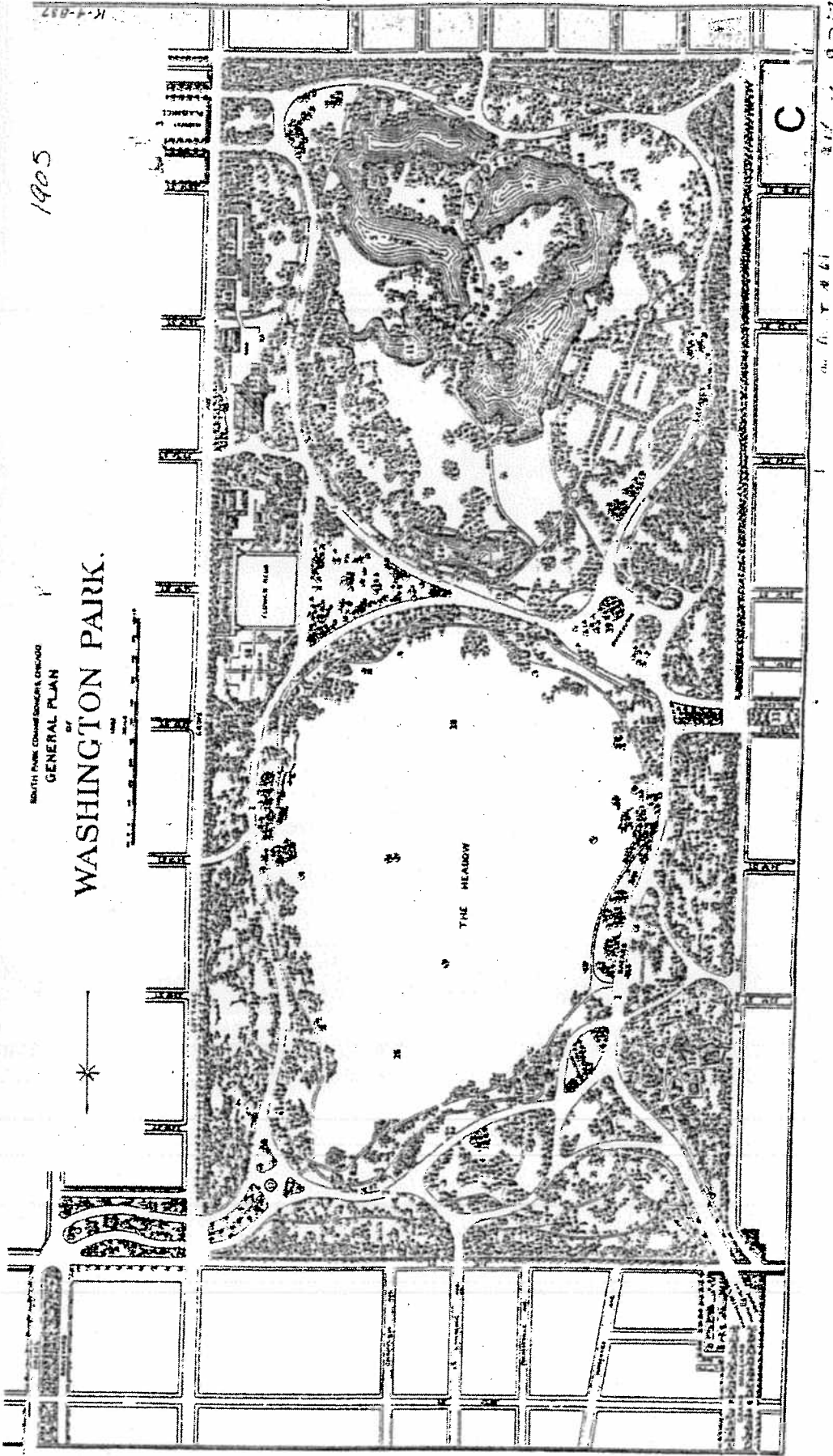
Washington Park
Chicago, Ill

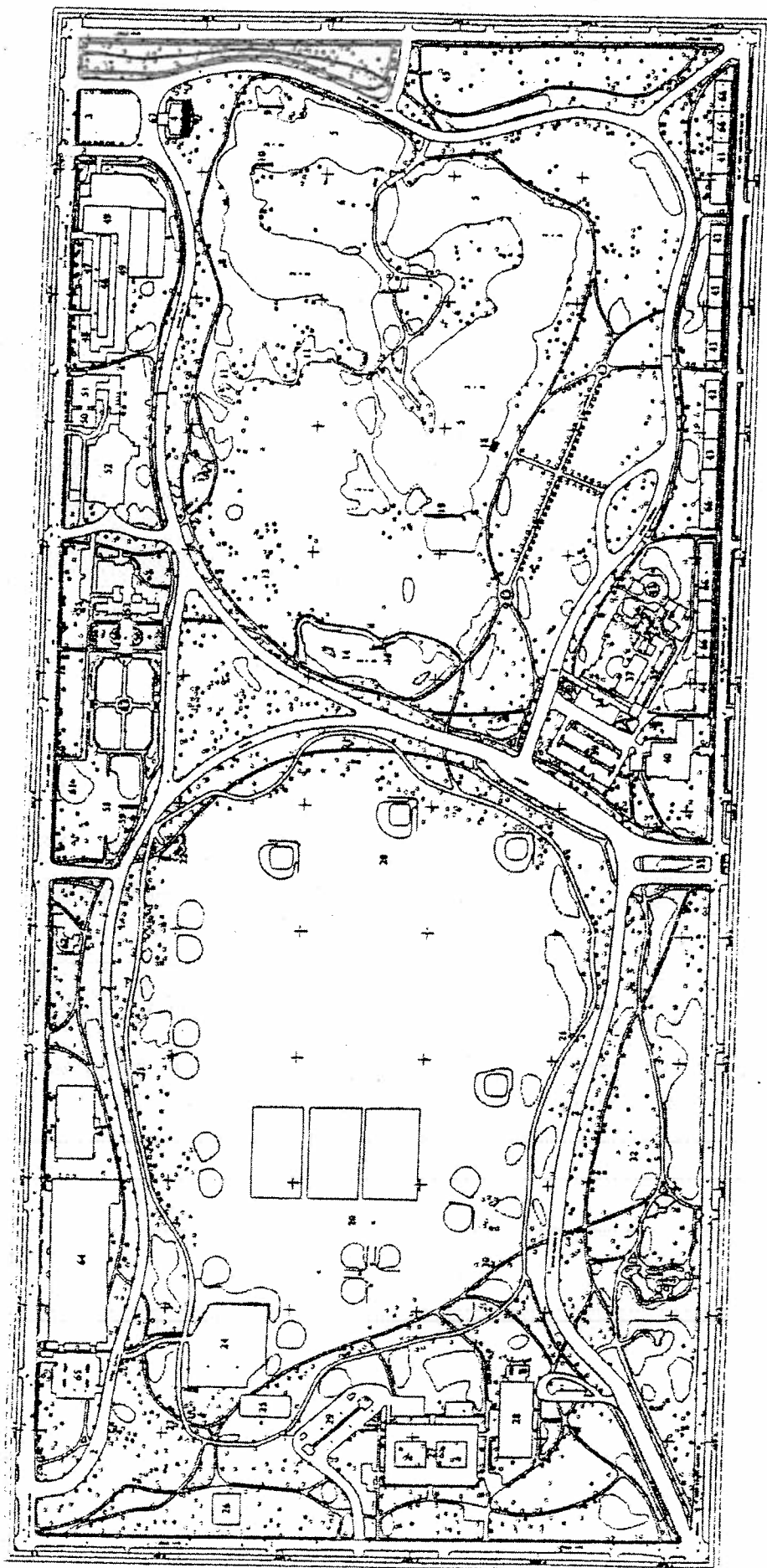
B

SOUTH PARK COMMISSIONERS, CHICAGO
GENERAL PLAN

WASHINGTON PARK.

1905





D
Washington Park
Chicago, IL
current
plan



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning
and Development

Denise M. Casalino, P.E.
Commissioner

Suite 1600
33 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602
(312) 744-3200
(312) 744-9140 (FAX)
(312) 744-2578 (TTY)
<http://www.cityofchicago.org>

June 7, 2004

Tracey A. Sculle
Survey & National Register Coordinator
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
1 Old State Capitol
Springfield, IL 62702

Re: Chicago nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for

- South Water Market, bounded by W. 14th Pl., S. Racine Ave., S. Morgan St., and the W. 16th St. rail embankment
- Washington Park, bounded by E. 51st St., S. Cottage Grove Ave., E. 60th St., and S. King Dr.
- Wrightwood Bungalow Historic District, 4600- and 4700-blocks Wrightwood Ave.

Dear Ms. Sculle:

This is in response to your letters of April 12 and 28 to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks asking for the Commission's comments on the nominations of the properties referenced above to the National Register of Historic Places. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of Chicago is given the opportunity to comment on local nominations to the National Register prior to being considered by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council.

At its regular meeting of June 3, 2004, the Commission voted unanimously to support the National Register listings for all three nominations. The Commission's resolution is attached.

Please contact Terry Tatum of my staff at 312-744-9147 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Brian Goeken
Deputy Commissioner
Landmarks Division

Originated by:

Terry Tatum
Director of Research
Landmarks Division

encl.

cc: Susan Baldwin, Baldwin Historic Properties
Julia Bachrach, Chicago Park District
Emily Ramsey, Historic Chicago Bungalow Association
Chicago University Commons LLC, c/o The Enterprise Companies
Hieu Trong
HC Realty, LLC
Bill Povalla, Department of Housing
Judy Minor-Jackson, Department of Planning and Development
Mary Bonome, Department of Planning and Development
Danitra Childers, Department of Planning and Development



Resolution
by the
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
on the
Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places
for

**South Water Market,
bounded by W. 14th Pl., S. Racine Ave., S. Morgan St., and the W. 16th St. rail
embankment**

**Washington Park,
bounded by E. 51st St., S. Cottage Grove Ave., E. 60th St., and S. King Dr.**

**Wrightwood Bungalow Historic District,
4600- and 4700-blocks W. Wrightwood Ave.**

June 3, 2004

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks finds that:

- South Water Market meets Criterion A for planning and community development as the City of Chicago's long-time produce market building complex; and that
- Washington Park meets Criterion A for entertainment/recreation and social history and Criterion C for architecture and landscape architecture as one of Chicago's most significant large-scale parks; and that
- the Wrightwood Bungalow Historic District meets Criteria A for community planning and development and C for architecture as a coherent group of Chicago bungalows that reflect the definition of the Chicago bungalow building type under the already listed "Chicago Bungalow" Multiple Property Documentation form.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that it hereby supports the listing of all three nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.



Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

1 Old State Capitol Plaza • Springfield, Illinois 62701-1507 • Teletypewriter Only (217) 524-7128

Voice (217) 782-4836

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Richard M. Daley, City of Chicago
Brian Goeken, Landmarks Division, Department of Planning and Development

FROM: Tracey A. Sculle, Survey and National Register Coordinator *TAS*

DATE: April 12, 2004

SUBJECT: Preliminary Opinion on Washington Park in Chicago, Illinois

Washington Park located at 5531 South King Drive (mailing address) is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under the Multiple Property Documentation Form, entitled "The Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District." The park is bounded on the north by East 51st Street, on the south by East 60th Street, on the east by Cottage Grove Avenue and the west by South King Drive. Washington Park is nationally significant and meets Criteria A and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for the following areas of significance: Entertainment/ Recreation, Social History, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture. It was designed in 1871 by Frederick Law Olmsted, as part of the large 1055 acre South Park that consisted of Jackson Park, the Midway Plaisance and Washington Park. The Jackson Park and Midway Plaisance was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. The period of significance for Washington Park is from 1872, when construction commenced, to 1954, the fifty-year cutoff for National Register significance. Washington Park retains sufficient integrity to convey both its historic and architectural importance and will make a fine addition to the National Register of Historic Places.

96 S. Humboldt St.,
Willits, 04000620,
LISTED, 8/19/04

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
South Water Market,
Bounded by 14th Place, the 16th St. rail embankment, Racine Ave., and Morgan
St.,
Chicago, 04000870,
LISTED, 8/20/04

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
Washington Park,
5531 S. King Dr.,
Chicago, 04000871,
LISTED, 8/20/04
(Chicago Park District MPS)

ILLINOIS, HENRY COUNTY,
Henry County Courthouse,
307 W. Center St.,
Cambridge, 04000869,
LISTED, 8/20/04

ILLINOIS, MADISON COUNTY,
Collinsville City Hall and Fire Station,
125 S. Center St.,
Collinsville, 04000865,
LISTED, 8/20/04

ILLINOIS, PIKE COUNTY,
Massie Variety Store,
110 S. Main St.,
New Canton, 04000864,
LISTED, 8/20/04

ILLINOIS, STEPHENSON COUNTY,
People's State Bank,
300 W. High St.,
Orangeville, 04000868,
LISTED, 8/20/04

ILLINOIS, WILL COUNTY,
Ninth Street Seven Arch Stone Bridge,
Ninth St. spanning Deep Run Creek,
Lockport, 04000866,
LISTED, 8/20/04

IOWA, DUBUQUE COUNTY,
Langworthy Historic District,
Langworthy, West Third, Melrose Terrace, vet. Hill and W. 5th, Alpine and
Walnut bet. Solon and W. Fifth,
Dubuque, 04000813,
LISTED, 8/12/04
(Dubuque, Iowa MPS)

IOWA, DUBUQUE COUNTY,
West Eleventh Street Historic District,
Bounded by Grove Terrace, Loras Blvd., Wilbur and Walnut Sts.,
Dubuque, 04000814,
LISTED, 8/12/04
(Dubuque, Iowa MPS)

MONTANA, CASCADE COUNTY,